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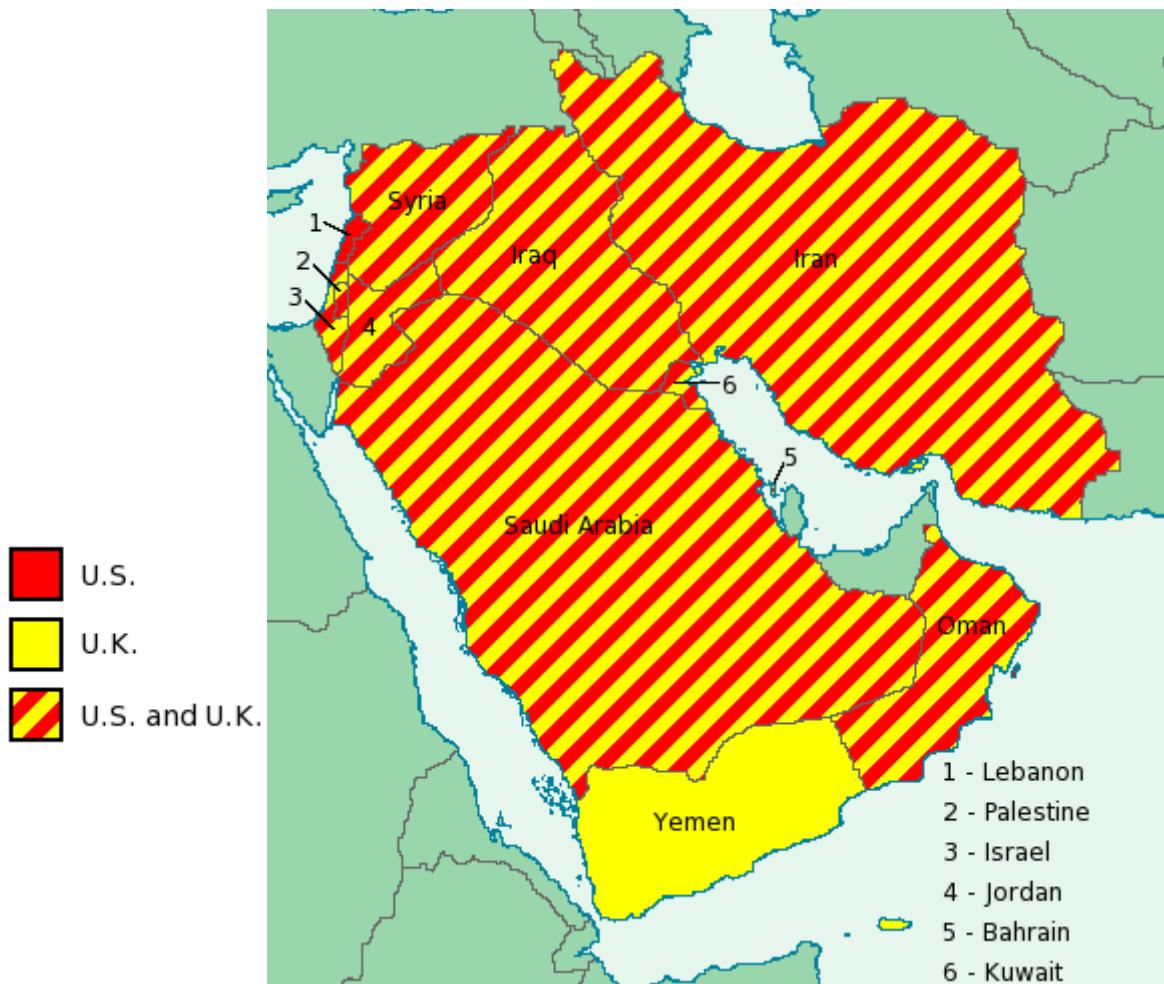
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Intervention and Exploitation: US and UK Government International Actions Since 1945

Middle East



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Syria

1940-1944:

French rule is broken by the capitulation of France to the Nazis. The British and Free French forces defeat the Vichy forces in Syria, but necessity forces them to allow the Syrians to largely take over their own government. [5]

1944:

September - Despite French opposition, the US and Soviets recognize Syria as a sovereign state. British recognition follows a year later. France refuses to withdraw its troops without Syria granting it privileges. [5]

1945:

January - The Syrian government forms its own army and declares war on the Axis powers. [5]

March - Syria joins the UN. [5]

April - Syria joins the League of Arab States. [5]

May - In response to demonstrations in Damascus and Aleppo against the continued French presence, the French bomb and machine-gun Damascus. There is also fighting in Homs and Hamah. A British threat to intervene forces the French to order a ceasefire. [5]

1946:

February - A UN resolution calls on the French to leave Syria. [5]

April - The last French troops leave Syria. [5]

1947:

November - The UN declaration calling for partition of Palestine into Jewish and Arab states provokes a general strike in Damascus and major rioting throughout Syria. Armed bands of irregulars from Syria's fledgling armed forces begin to raid Jewish settlements near the Syrian border. [5]

1948:

May - Syrian troops join the fight against Israel. Syrian forces consist of 8,000 troops, a battalion of French built tanks and a small air force. They attack Israel near Lake Tiberias (Sea of Galilee) from the Golan Heights. [5]

June - The UN imposes a truce with Israel. The Arab forces had proved incompetent and the Syrians had been driven back across their border in all but two locations. [5]

October - Following Syria's defeat, the war along Israel's northern border ends. [5]

1949:

March - The British, French and US back a successful coup by Brigadier General Husni al Zaim. One of the first acts of the new regime is to approve the building of a US owned oil pipeline, which the previous government had not approved. [3] [5] [19] [21]

July - The last sporadic fighting along the Israeli border ceases with the signing of a Syrian-Israeli armistice agreement. About 100,000 Palestinians fled to Syria from Israel during and after the war. [5]

August - Coup led by Brigadier General Sami al Hinnawi. Both Zaim and Prime Minister Muhsin al Barazi are executed. [5]

November - Elections in which women are allowed to vote for the first time. [5]

1951:

November - Military coup by Adib Shishakli. [5]

1952:

April - Shishakli bans all political parties except his own. [5]

1953:

July - Syria is made a presidential republic with Shishakli as president. [5]

1954:

February - Shishakli is overthrown in another military coup. A civilian government is restored. [5]

Syria starts to build relations with the Soviet Union. [5]

1955:

December - Israeli forces kill 50 Syrian troops in a cross border attack. [5]

1956:

October - A US instigated coup by Michail Bey Ilyan is called off when Israel invades Egypt. The UK was also involved in planning this coup. [1] [2] [3]

November - The US embassy in Syria has false reports placed in the US and British press stating that Russian arms are pouring into Syria, including "not more than 123 Migs". There were none. [2]

1957:

February - The Soviet Union calls for a declaration by the US, USSR, UK and France that they will all renounce the use of force and interference in the internal affairs of Middle Eastern countries. They also call for an embargo on arms shipments to the region, the withdrawal of all foreign troops, the liquidation of all foreign bases and a conference to reach a general Middle East settlement. The US, UK and France all refuse. [2]

April - The Soviet Union renews its call for a declaration by the four powers. [2]

August - Another CIA organised coup attempt is foiled when Syrian army officers bribed by the CIA tell Syria's head of intelligence about it; handing him their bribe money as they do so. The CIA officers concerned are expelled from the country. [1] [2]

September - The US sends its Sixth Fleet to the Mediterranean and sends arms and other military equipment to Jordan, Lebanon, Iraq, Turkey and Saudi Arabia. The US also has Turkey move 50,000 troops to its border with Syria. The US is apparently trying to goad Syria into a use of force in order to justify a military intervention. In response the Soviet Union ships arms to Syria, Egypt and Yemen. However, Syria did not rise to the bait and other Arab states refused to back up the US rhetoric that Syria was a threat and Soviet satellite. [2]

British government documents show how the CIA and MI6 planned to use fake border incidents as an excuse for invasion by Syria's pro-western neighbours and then assassinate three key government figures. [20]

The Soviet Union again renews its call for a declaration by the four powers. [2]

1958:

January - Syria and Egypt announce their plans to unite, forming the United Arab Republic. Syria was partly motivated to propose this plan for fear of further US moves against her. As part of the arrangement the Communist Party in Syria is dissolved. [2]

May - An armed rebellion begins in Lebanon after growing discontent with the pro-US government earlier elected with the help of the CIA. Syria supplies the rebels with some arms, men and money, as does Egypt. [2]

1960:

February - Israel conducts a raid into Syrian territory. [5]

1961:

July - Various industries are nationalised. [5]

September - After increasing dissatisfaction with Egypt's dominance of the UAR, a military coup is staged and Syria secedes from the UAR. [5]

December - General elections. [5]

1962:

January - Many previously nationalised industries are returned to private ownership. [5]

February - Land reforms are reversed to favour landlords. [5]

March - After these unpopular changes another military coup ousts the government. [5]

April - After protests in several cities against the coup president Qudsi is returned to power by the military leaders, but unrest continues.[5]

US president, John F. Kennedy, meets the British Prime Minister, Macmillan, in London and they agree to "Penetration and cultivation of disruptive elements in the Syrian armed forces, particularly in the Syrian army, so that Syria can be guided by the West." [2]

1963:

January - Another coup is attempted, but fails. [5]

March - Another military coup. Salah al Din al Bitar becomes prime minister. [5]

July - Another attempted coup fails after intense fighting in Damascus. [5]

November - Bitar resigns and Hafiz becomes prime minister. [5]

1964:

April - Urban unrest becomes violent. [5]

May - Hafiz resigns and Bitar becomes prime minister again. [5]

1966:

February - Another coup makes Nureddin Atassi president and Yusuf Zuayyin prime minister. Salah al Jadid, the coup leader, became head of the armed forces. [5]

September - A counter coup fails. [5]

1967:

June - Israel attacks Syria, Egypt and Jordan in the Six Day War. Syria makes no major move of its ground forces. From Syria Israel seizes the Golan Heights. They also destroy most of the Syrian air force. An estimated 2,500 Syrian troops are killed and about 100,000 civilians driven from their homes in the Golan. This defeat causes a power shift within the government. Syria goes on to support a Palestinian guerilla force, As Saqa, but does not allow it to launch attacks against Israel from Syrian soil for fear of reprisals by Israel. At the same time Syria is critical of Jordan and Lebanon for seeking to control the Palestinian groups in their territories. [5]

1970:

September - Syria sends some 200 tanks to support the Palestinian guerillas in Jordan against the Jordanian government, who have launched an offensive against the guerillas who are challenging the government's authority. The US sends its Sixth Fleet to the Eastern Mediterranean, threatening to intervene on Jordan's behalf. Israel also made known its willingness to intervene. Against such opposition and also lacking support from its own air force due to political division, Syria is forced to withdraw. [5]

November - Jadid, who had wanted to support the Palestinian guerillas in Jordan, is removed from his position by units of Assad's army and detained under guard. Assad becomes prime minister and minister of defense. Ahmad al Khatib is made acting president. [5]

1971:

Fighting in Jordan between the PLO and Jordanian forces continues throughout this year, but most of the PLO fighters move to Syria. But the Syrian government places severe restrictions on them and most move to Lebanon. [5]

March - Assad is elected president. [5]

April - Syria, Egypt and Libya form the Federation of Arab Republics. [5]

1973:

May - Diplomatic relations with Britain are restored. [5]

October - Syria and Egypt attack Israel to try and regain territory previously lost to Israel. Syria deploys 45,000 men against Israel's 4,500 stationed in the Golan Heights on 6th October, the holy day of Yom Kippur in the Israeli calendar. Initially they gain much ground, but Israel then receives huge influxes of weapons from the US and counter attacks, driving them back. Israeli forces then advance into Syria destroying missile systems, oil installations, power plants, bridges and port facilities. A UN ceasefire is accepted on 24th October, but sporadic fighting continues until the disengagement in March 1974. An estimated 7,000 Syrian troops are killed and 21,000 wounded, in addition 600 tanks, 165 aircraft and 7 naval vessels are lost or destroyed. An additional 845 square kilometers of territory are taken by Israel. [5] [6]

1974:

March - As part of the disengagement agreement with Israel, Israel withdraws from newly captured territory and also from a narrow strip of the Golan Heights territory held since 1967. This strip forms part of a demilitarized zone in which a UN observer force (UNDOF) is deployed. [5]

1975:

A dispute over rights to the waters of the Euphrates River, a waterway essential to both countries, takes Syria and Iraq to the verge of war. Syria limited the water flowing out of its newly completed Euphrates (Tabaqah) Dam, thereby slowing the flow into Iraq. For two months both countries hurl invective at each other, and Syrian troops mass along the Iraqi border. Only Saudi Arabian mediation induces Syria to release more water from its Tabaqah reservoir "as a gesture of goodwill." [5]

August - Syria and Jordan form a military alliance against Israel. [5]

1976:

Syria provides troops to the Lebanese government in their civil war against the Palestinian guerillas. This is unpopular domestically and with other Arab countries although sanctioned by the Arab League. Syrian troops remain in eastern Lebanon after the war is over. [5]

Late 1970's:

There are a number of violent attacks directed at Assad's regime. The government blames these on Iraq and disaffected Palestinians and responds with public hangings in September 1976 and June 1977. [5]

1978:

February - Assad is elected president for another 7 year term. [5]

1979:

The Muslim Brotherhood claims credit for a series of attacks. The most serious occurs in June when 50 Alawi cadets at the military academy in Aleppo are killed by gunmen. [5]

1980:

Intellectual and professional groups form an alliance demanding political reforms such as freedom of the press, freedom of political action, promulgation of civil law, an end to the state of emergency and free parliamentary elections. [5]

June - Militants attempt to assassinate Assad. [5]

August - The Iran-Iraq war begins. Syria aligns itself with Iran. [5]

October - A Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation is signed with the Soviet Union. [5]

1981:

March-April - Government security forces try to root out the Muslim Brotherhood from Hamah and Aleppo. 200 to 300 people are killed are parts of the cities destroyed. [5]

December - Israel formally annexes the Golan Heights. [5]

1982:

February - The Muslim Brotherhood ambushes government forces in Hamah. The military crushes the insurgents in two weeks of fighting. 10,000 to 25,000 people are killed, including about 1,000 soldiers and large sections of the city are destroyed. Subsequently an opposition alliance is formed called the National

Alliance for the Liberation of Syria, including the Muslim Brotherhood, the Islamic Front, the pro-Iraqi wing of the Baath party and others. [5]

Syria starts to receive oil from Iran as repayment for its support and compensation for the closure of the Iraqi oil pipeline running through Syria. [5]

June - Israel invades Lebanon in order to crush the Palestinian and Shia groups there. They destroy Syrian surface-to-air missiles deployed in the Biqa Valley, as well as about 79 Syrian MiG-21 and MiG-23 aircraft. The US equipped Israeli's suffer only minor aircraft losses. Syrian armoured divisions prevent the Israeli's reaching the Damascus-Beirut highway, but Israeli forces move into West Beirut, attacking from land and sea, and laying seige to the Palestinian fighters there. [5]

July - Under a US mediated agreement, PLO fighters are evacuated to various Arab countries and Syrian troops withdraw to the Biqa Valley in east Lebanon. [5]

September - Israeli forces again enter West Beirut. They enter the Palestinian refugee camps of Sabra and Shatila and massacre civilians there. Israeli forces remain in Beirut for another year. [5]

1983:

Syria supports a Palestinian rebellion against Yasir Arafat's leadership of the PLO in Damascus and eastern Lebanon. In June Arafat is expelled from Damascus. [5]

1985:

November - Israel shoots down two Syrian MiG-23s in Syrian airspace. The Syrian aircraft had scrambled when Israeli aircraft flew over eastern Lebanon. Subsequently Syria deploys mobile SAM sites in eastern Lebanon and SAMs on its border with Lebanon. [5]

1987:

February - Assad sends troops into Lebanon again to enforce a ceasefire in Beirut. [22]

1990:

Syria is one of the many countries to accept US bribes to not oppose a war against Iraq. [2]

2000:

June - Assad dies and is succeeded by his son, Bashar. [22]

2001:

June - Syrian troops evacuate Beirut and redeploy in other parts of Lebanon, following pressure from Lebanese critics of Syria's presence. [22]

2002:

The UK supplies Syria, amongst many other countries, with Toxic Chemical Precursors (TCPs) capable of being used in making chemical weapons. [4]

2003:

The US makes plans for possible nuclear strikes against Iran, Iraq, Libya and Syria. [13]

October - There is an Israeli air strike against an alleged Palestinian militant camp near Damascus. Syria says the action is "military aggression". [22]

2004:

January - President Assad visits Turkey, the first Syrian leader to do so. The trip marks the end of decades of frosty relations. [22]

May - The US imposes economic sanctions on Syria over what it calls its support for terrorism and failure to stop militants entering Iraq.[22]

2005:

February-March - Tensions with the US escalate after the killing of former Lebanese PM Hariri in Beirut. Washington cites Syrian influence in Lebanon. Damascus is urged to withdraw its forces from Lebanon. [22]

April - Syria withdraws the last of its military forces from Lebanon. [22]

2006:

February - The US allocates \$5 million to finance the Syrian opposition. [7] [8]

June - Iran and Syria sign a defence agreement. [15]

July - Thousands of people flee into Syria to escape Israel's bombardment of Lebanon. [22]

September - Attack on the US embassy in Damascus. Four gunmen open fire and throw grenades but fail to detonate a car bomb. Three of them are killed, one is captured. [22]

November - Iraq and Syria restore diplomatic relations after nearly a quarter century. [22]

December - Aid agencies say they are struggling to cope with the growing numbers of Iraqis fleeing into Syria. [22]

2007:

May - US blocks peace talks between Syria and Israel. [9]

Syria jails opposition leader after visiting the US. [10]

September - Israel bombs a site in Syria. No explanation is made by anyone. [11] [12] [14]

2008:

February - The US imposes new sanctions on Syria. [16]

Imad Mughnayeh, a Hezbollah leader, is killed in Damascus, probably by Mossad, the Israeli secret service. [17]

March - Tens of thousands of Syrians protest against the Israeli attacks on the Gaza Strip. [18]

Summary

1946: Last French troops leave.

1948: Syria fights Israel.

1949-1954: US, UK & French back military coup. Three coups follow.

1956-1958: US & UK backed coup attempts and propaganda. Syria arms Lebanese rebels.

1961-1966: Two coups. US & UK plan to subvert. Two more coups.

1967: Israel attacks in Six Day War.

1970: Fedayeen in Jordan backed.

1971-1973: Assad president. US backs Israel against Syria & Egypt.

1976: Syria backs Lebanese government against Fedayeen. Assad regime attacked.

1981-1985: Muslim Brotherhood conflicts. Israel annexes Golan Heights & invades Lebanon. Arafat expelled. Israel shoots Syrian jets.

2000-2005: Assad succeeded by son. Troops leave Beirut. UK sells TCPs to Syria. Israeli air strike. US sanctions. Troops leave Lebanon.

2006-2008: US funds opposition & blocks peace talks. Israel bombs. US imposes more sanctions.

Iran

1941:

Britain and the Soviet Union invade western Iran to counter the threat of expanding Nazi influence. [1]

1947:

October - Mohammed Mossadegh successfully leads the move to reject a proposal to set up a joint Irano-Soviet oil company to exploit the oil of Northern Iran. [12]

1949:

World War II having ended, Iran becomes a target of both pro-Western and pro-Soviet forces with regard to the country's vast oil reserves. [1]

1950:

General Ali Razmara becomes prime minister of Iran. [1]

Support grows for the nationalization of Iran's oil industry. [1]

The Iranian oil industry is controlled by the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company (AIOC), later to become British Petroleum, owned partly by the British Government and partly by British citizens. AIOC's revenues from the industry are greater than those of the Iranian government. The Iranian government is receiving between 10% and 12% of the net profits, whilst the British government is receiving as much as 30% in taxes alone. The AIOC also paid low wages to Iranians, treated them poorly and effectively ruled the oil producing regions. [3]

1951:

March - Prime Minister Ali Razmara is assassinated. [1]

A bill for nationalising the the British owned Anglo Iranian Oil (AIOC) company, the only oil company in Iran, is passed. Mohammed Mossadegh led the parliamentary movement driving for this change. [12]

April - Mossadegh is elected Prime minister by a large majority of Parliament. [12]

May 1st - Nationalisation of the AIOC goes into effect. Mossadegh tells the Iranian people that they "were opening a hidden treasure on which lies a dragon". [12]

Britain warns Iran that any attempt to take over British oil properties without negotiations would have "the most serious consequences." [2]

The Iranian government offers to set aside 25% of the net oil profits to compensate the British; it guarantees the safety and jobs of British employees and is willing to sell its oil through the established control system. The British refuse to listen. [3] [12]

Aided by the US government and oil companies the British institute an international economic blockade of Iran and freeze its assets. This pushes the already poor country to near destitution. From the impoverished Iran, Britain demands compensation for not only the physical assets of the AIOC, but for the initial development and for loss of future profits, regardless of the huge profits they had already made. [3][12]

June - Attlee government begins covert plan to overthrow Iranian prime minister Musaddegh following the latter's nationalisation of oil operations. They plan to install Sayyid Zia as Prime Minister, because although he has no popular support they believe he will give them a favourable oil settlement. [3]

Invasion is also considered, but the British government concludes that it cannot deploy sufficient troops for success. [3]

July - A demonstration organised by the Iranian Communist Party (The Tudeh) is brutally suppressed by the Mossadegh government. About 100 people die and about 500 are injured. [12]

October - Churchill, now the British Prime Minister, berates his predecessors for not using force against the Iranians. [3]

November - A British Foreign Office official reports that the 'unofficial efforts to undermine Dr. Mossadegh are making good progress'. [3]

1952:

The British government now favours establishing a dictatorship in Iran, with a 'strong man' ruling in the name of the Shah. General Zahidi, formerly imprisoned by the British for pro-Nazi activities, is identified as a suitable candidate and discussions are begun with him. [3]

July - Due to growing friction between the shah and Mossadegh over oil, Mossadegh resigns. Ahmed Ghavam takes over as prime minister. Three days of rioting ensue. [1]

Under pressure, the Shah is forced to reappoint Mossadegh. [1]

The International Court of Justice rules that it has no jurisdiction in the British-Iranian dispute over oil nationalization. [4]

August - A British embassy official meets with Zahidi and records that he is willing to take on the premiership. He suggests that Zahidi makes this known to the US. [3]

October - The Iranian government closes down the British embassy, because of the intrigues going on there. [3]

November - The British Churchill government approaches the US for help in overthrowing Mossadegh. British pay offs have already secured cooperation from senior officers of the army and police, deputies and senators, mullahs, merchants, newspaper editors, elder statesmen, and mob leaders. [3] [12]

1953:

January - A US State Department report rules out any possibility that the Tudeh could come to power in Iran. [12]

February - A British delegation meets the CIA director and the US Secretary of State, whilst the head of the CIA's operation, Kermit Roosevelt, is dispatched to Iran to investigate the situation. [3]

April - A C.I.A. study entitled "Factors Involved in the Overthrow of Mossadegh" is completed. The study concludes that a coup in Iran is possible. [1]

May - C.I.A. and British intelligence officers meet in Nicosia, Cyprus, to draft plans for the coup. Meanwhile, the C.I.A.'s Tehran station is granted approval to launch a "grey propaganda" campaign to discredit the Mossadegh government. [1]

June - The final operation plan for the coup, agreed upon by both the C.I.A. and British intelligence, is submitted to the U.S. State Department and the Foreign Office in London. [1] [3] [12]

July - Churchill and Eisenhower give final approval to the operational plan for the coup. [1] [3]

Under pressure from the C.I.A., Princess Ashraf, the Shah's sister, flies to Tehran from France in order to convince the Shah to sign the royal decrees that would dismiss Mossadegh. [1]

The C.I.A. intensifies a propaganda effort, which included planting stories in major American newspapers, to weaken the Mossadegh government. [1]

August - In a meeting with Gen. H. Norman Schwarzkopf, the Shah refuses to sign the C.I.A.-written royal decrees firing Mossadegh and naming Gen. Zahedi as the new prime minister of Iran. [1]

Mossadegh, suspecting that British and American governments were plotting against him, holds a referendum calling for the Iranian parliament to be dissolved. [1]

13th - The shah signs a royal decree dismissing Mossadegh. Word of the shah's support for the coup spreads quickly in Iran. [1] [12]

15th - Mossadegh refuses to abdicate, maintaining that only parliament can dismiss him. He denounces Zahedi as a traitor and tries to have him arrested, but the CIA hide him. [12]

After hearing a prearranged signal given by the BBC in its Persian language broadcast, the shah flees to Rome via Baghdad. [1] [3] [12]

Belatedly, the CIA recruit Iranian agents to try and gain military support for the coup. The CIA make copies of the Shah's decree for distribution to the public. [12]

16th - A mass demonstration in support of Mossadegh is organised by the ruling coalition. [1] [12]

19th - With access to \$1 million of US cash the CIA's Iranian agents buy a mob and stage a pro Shah, anti Mossadegh parade. British agents had also already received £1.5 million to facilitate the coup. During the march pro Shah troops take over Radio Tehran and it is announced that Mossadegh has been dismissed and General Zahedi is the new Prime Minister. This is not true, but the CIA now brings Zahedi out of hiding to install him. [1] [3] [12]

The US Military Mission in Iran supplies hardware and supplies to aid the coup. [3] [12]

A nine hour battle ensues in front Mossadegh's house, between soldiers loyal to Mossadegh and those supporting Zahedi. Some 300 people are killed and hundreds more wounded before Mossadegh's defenders are defeated. [1] [3] [12]

20th - Mossadegh, who had gone into hiding after yesterday's defeat, gives himself up. [1]

22nd - The Shah returns to Iran. [1]

The coup is portrayed to the US and British public as a response to the threat of a communist takeover, although both governments had concluded that there was no threat of this happening. [3] [12]

In the years after the coup Iran is a close ally to the USA. The Shah places the country at the disposal of the US military and intelligence organisations. Bases are set up for cold war operations against the Soviet Union across Iran's over 1,000 mile border with the USSR. [12]

Britain too builds a monitoring station on the Iran-Soviet border which is protected by the SAS. SAS soldiers are also loaned to Iran to help train the Shah's special forces for operations against Kurdish guerillas in northern Iran. [3]

For most people life under the Shah becomes one of poverty, police terror and torture. The Iranian secret police, SAVAK, created with the help of the CIA and Israel, grow to operate worldwide in putting down Iranian dissidents. [3] [12]

The CIA begins to make payments to the ayatollahs to ensure their support for the Shah. These continue until 1977, when President Carter halts them. [12]

December 21st - Mossadegh is sentenced to three years solitary confinement by a military tribunal. [1]

1954:

With Zahedi acting as prime minister and the pro-Shah army units in control, hundreds of National Front leaders, communist Tudeh Party officers and political activists are arrested. [1]

Mossadegh's minister of foreign affairs, Hossein Fatemi, is sentenced to death and executed. [1]

The British lose their exclusive oil rights. They now have 40%, US oil firms have 40%, the rest is given to other countries. The British are generously compensated for their former property. [3] [12]

The Anglo-Iranian Oil Company resumes operation. [1]

1955:

February - Iran joins the Baghdad Pact, a coalition set up by the US to oppose the Soviet Union. [12]

1963-1964:

Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, a religious leader, is exiled to Turkey after his arrest for speaking out against the shah's relationship with the United States. [1]

1972:

May - The CIA complies with the Shah's request to help arm the Kurds in Iraq who were fighting for independence. The Shah wanted the Kurds to be more of a drain on Iraq's resources, thus distracting Iraq from an ongoing border dispute with Iran. [12]

1973:

Iran, encouraged by the US, seeks to replace the Soviet Union as Afghanistan's biggest donor with a \$2 billion economic aid agreement. Iran's infamous secret police, SAVAK, also fingers suspected Communist sympathisers in the Afghan government and military. [12]

1975:

March - The Shah, who since 1973 had desired to strengthen Iran's position in OPEC by coming to agreements with other Arab states, comes to an agreement with Iraq. The Shah cuts off all supplies to the Kurds and Iraq launches an offensive against them. The Kurds plead for help from the CIA and Kissinger, whom they believed were their allies, but neither make any response and the Kurds are defeated. 200,000 Kurds flee into Iran where they receive little humanitarian assistance. Iran later forcibly returns over 40,000 of them. The US government refuses to admit any Kurds into the US as refugees. When later interviewed by the Pike Committee about this affair, Kissinger responds: "Covert action should not be confused with missionary work." [12]

September - Prodded by Iran, which is conditioning its aid on such policies, the Afghan leader, Daoud, dismisses 40 Soviet trained military officers and moves to reduce future Afghan dependence on officer training in the USSR by initiating training arrangements with India and Egypt. [12]

1976:

Amnesty International reports that Iran has the "highest rate of death penalties in the world, no valid system of civilian courts and a history of torture which is beyond belief. No country in the world has a worse record in human rights than Iran." [3] [12]

Such is the fruit of the regime installed and backed by the US government.

1978:

Turmoil sweeps Iran. Khomeini establishes an opposition movement in Paris. [1]

1979:

January - The Iranian revolution forces the shah to leave. [1]

February - Khomeini returns to proclaim an Islamic republic. [1]

The Afghan government accuses Iran of aiding the mujahedeen gorillas trying to bring them down. [12]

October - The Shah is allowed into the United States for cancer treatment in New York. [1]

November - With Khomeini's support, Iranian students occupy the American Embassy in Tehran. Fifty-two Americans are held hostage for 444 days. The United States freezes Iranian assets. [1]

US National Security Advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski then publicly encourages Iraq to attack Iran and take back the Shatt-al-Arab waterway. [5]

1980:

The United States breaks ties with Iran, bans American exports to the country and expels Iranian diplomats. [1]

April - A secret American military mission to rescue the hostages is aborted because of bad weather. Eight servicemen die in a helicopter crash. The shah dies in Egypt at age 60. [1]

August - The U.S. provide Iraq with intelligence reports that Iran would quickly collapse in the face of an Iraqi advance. At the urging of U.S.-backed Arab rulers in Kuwait, Egypt and elsewhere, Saddam Hussein unleashes a war with Iran in which hundreds of thousands die. [5] [14]

The attack serves U.S. interests by weakening Iran, where U.S. embassy personnel were still kept hostage. The U.S. do not want either side to win. [5]

To sustain the eight year war Iraq receive massive assistance, direct and indirect, from the U.S.S.R., Eastern bloc countries, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Saudi Arabia, the U.S., U.K., France, and West Germany. The Pentagon and CIA provides Iraq with satellite and AWACS intelligence on Iranian forces. The U.S. send CIA and Special Forces to train Iraqi commandos and the U.S. helps funnel billions of dollars worth of arms to Iraq. [5]

This war is the first to use chemical weapons since the US invasion of Vietnam. Between 1978 and 1988 the US ships seven strains of anthrax to Iraq. [14]

Egypt, a major recipient of U.S. military aid, sends troops, tanks and heavy artillery to Iraq. In 1980, the military dictatorship in Turkey - a major recipient of U.S. military aid - sends troops to fight rebels in Iraqi Kurdistan, freeing Iraq's army to concentrate on fighting Iran. [5]

The U.S.-supported regimes in Kuwait and Saudi Arabia also support Iraq's war effort. Kuwait's contributes over \$30 billion. The U.S. sell over \$20 billion worth of arms to Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and other Gulf states during this period and allow Saudi Arabia to transfer large quantities of U.S. arms to Iraq during the war. [5] Israel supplies arms to Iran for the war against Iraq, their stated aim, like that of the US government, is to prolong the war as long as possible. [14]

The UK openly supplies arms to Iraq, but also MI6 work with an Iranian born arms dealer, Jamshid Hashemi, to help supply foreign arms to Iran, in direct violation of the British Government's guidelines. In one deal British made motorboats, reinforced to carry heavy machine guns, are exported to Iran via Greece. These boats are used against civilian shipping in the tanker war in the gulf in the mid 1980's. [3]

During the war between the Soviets and the mujahedeen in Afghanistan the US pours billions of dollar worth of arms into the region. Some never gets to the Afghans and the Afghans themselves sell hundreds of millions of dollars worth to whomsoever will pay. Some of it ends up in the hands of the Iranian military. [12]

1981:

The hostages are released minutes after President Carter's term ends. A United States-Iran claims tribunal is set up in The Hague. [1]

1982:

After the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in June and the subsequent introduction of Western troops, Iran sends 1,500 Revolutionary guards to the Syrian controlled Bekaa valley. Soon after, Hezbollah is organised under Iranian sponsorship. [14]

1984:

March - The UN reports that Iraq has used poison gas against Iranian troops. [14]

1985:

Oliver North tells Iranian officials that the US will try to engineer the overthrow of Hussein. Until 1986 the US funnelled arms to Iran through Oliver North, Israel and Pakistan. [5] [6] [7] (See Nicaragua.)

1986:

Revelations emerge of an American deal to exchange arms for Iranian help in freeing hostages held in Lebanon. [1]

UN confirm that Iraq is using chemical weapons against Iran. [8]

1987:

Iran and Iraq start trying to destroy each other's oil facilities. Kuwait calls on the USSR and USA for naval protection. The possibility of Soviet involvement enables the US to justify becoming directly involved on Iraq's side, flagging Kuwaiti tankers in the Gulf, escorting ships carrying Iraqi oil, sinking Iranian patrol ships and destroying oil platforms, thus establishing a military presence in the Gulf. [8]

October - Iranian Revolutionary Guards fire a Stinger missile at a US helicopter patrolling the Persian gulf, but miss. The Stinger missile is a US weapon. The Iranians had bought a number of these missiles from the mujahedeen who had been given them by the US to help fight the Soviets with. [12]

1988:

The American cruiser Vincennes mistakenly shoots down an Iranian airliner over the Persian Gulf, killing all 290 aboard. [1]

In the spring, Iran, with the assistance of the Kurdish Rebel Organisations the PUK and KDP, launch an offensive into Northern Iraq capturing the town of Halabja on the 15th of March. The next day the Iraqi airforce bomb Halabja with poison gas, causing 5000 deaths.[8] [9]

David Mellor, then a Foreign Office minister, was allegedly visiting Baghdad at the time. Within a month Defence Minister Tony Newton had returned to Baghdad to offer, on behalf of the British Thatcher government £340 million in export credits. Britain's trade with Iraq had risen from £2.9 million in 1987 to £31.5 million. Iraq becomes Britain's third biggest market for 'dual-use' machine tools. [8]

In August Iran and Iraq agree a cease fire. [8]

Western sources estimate casualties at nearly 400,000 dead and 780,000 wounded: one quarter Iraqi, three quarter Iranian. The cost of the war exceeded the entire oil revenue received by Iran and Iraq since they started to sell their oil on the world market in 1949 and 1931 respectively. [8]

One day after the cease-fire Kuwait decides to increase oil production, violating OPEC agreements and sending the crude oil price from 21 US dollars to 11 dollars a barrel, costing Iraq 14 billion a year in lost revenues; this at a time when Iraq and Iran needed stable prices to reconstruct. Bahrain also began to increase production. [8]

1989:

Ayatollah Khomeini dies and is replaced as the nation's spiritual leader by Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. The speaker of Iran's Parliament, Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, is elected president. [1]

1992:

December - Elliot Abrams who had pleaded guilty to misdemeanors in the Iran- contra affair is pardoned by President Bush. He is later appointed by Bush II to lead the National Security Council office for Near East and North African affairs..... [13]

1993:

The Clinton administration starts a campaign to isolate Iran, accusing it of supporting terrorism, seeking nuclear arms and trying to derail Middle East peace. [1]

1996:

President Clinton signs a law that imposes sanctions on foreign companies investing heavily in "terrorist" Iran or Libya. [1]

1997:

Mohammad Khatami, a moderate cleric, wins Iran's presidential election. Clinton calls the election hopeful, but insists that ties are not possible until Iran renounces terrorism, opposition to the Middle East peace effort and weapons of mass destruction. [1]

Clinton asks Khatami for help in solving the 1996 bombing of a Saudi building in which 19 American servicemen died and hundreds were wounded. [1]

The Clinton administration renews an offer for talks "on the basis of equality and mutual respect." Iran rejects the offer two days later. [1]

The United States agrees to let Boeing provide Iran's national airline with parts to ensure the safety of its 747's. [1]

1998:

Khatami proposes cultural exchanges as a way to end mistrust, but rules out a government-to-government dialogue. [1]

Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright invites Iranians to join with the United States in drawing up "a road map leading to normal relations." Iran responds that such a step must be followed up by acts. [1]

1999:

The Clinton administration announces it will let American companies sell food and medical items to three countries off-limits as terrorist — Iran, Libya and Sudan. [1]

2000:

Albright announces the lifting of a ban on American imports of Iranian luxury goods. She acknowledges America's role in the 1953 coup, coming closer to apologizing for it than any American official ever has. [1]

2001:

The US alleges that elements within the Iranian Government were directly involved in the bombing of an American military base in Saudi Arabia in 1996. Tehran angrily rejects the allegations. [11]

Report by Central Intelligence Agency accuses Iran of having one of the world's most active programmes to acquire nuclear weapons. The CIA report says Iran is seeking missile-related technology from a number of countries including Russia and China. [11]

2002:

US President George Bush describes Iraq, Iran and North Korea as an "axis of evil", warning of the proliferation of long-range missiles being developed in these countries. The speech causes outrage in Iran and is condemned by reformists and conservatives alike. [10]

Russian technicians begin construction of Iran's first nuclear reactor at Bushehr despite strong objections from US. [10]

The US accuses Iran of seeking to develop a secret nuclear weapons programme and publishes satellite images of two nuclear sites under construction at Natanz and Arak. [11]

2003:

February-May - The UN's International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) conducts a series of inspections in Iran. The country confirms that there are sites at Natanz and Arak under construction, but insists that these, like Bushehr, are designed solely to provide fuel for future power plants. [11]

Iran offers "full cooperation" with the US government on the issues of "nuclear programs, acceptance of Israel and the termination of Iranian support for Palestinian militant groups." The US turns the offer down. [30] [31]

June - White House refuses to rule out the "military option" in dealing with Iran after IAEA says Iran "failed to report certain nuclear materials and activities". But IAEA does not declare Iran in breach of Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. [11]

Thousands attend student-led protests in Tehran against clerical establishment. [10]

October-November - Tehran agrees to suspend its uranium enrichment programme and allow tougher UN inspections of its nuclear facilities. An IAEA report says Iran has admitted producing plutonium but adds there is no evidence that it was trying to build an atomic bomb. However, US dismisses the report as "impossible to believe". The IAEA votes to censure Iran but stops short of imposing sanctions. [11]

2004:

June - Iran is rebuked by the IAEA for failing to fully cooperate with an inquiry into its nuclear activities. [10] Three British naval craft and their crews are impounded after allegedly straying into Iranian waters. The eight servicemen are released four days later. [10]

November - Iran agrees to suspend most of its uranium enrichment as part of deal with EU. [10]

2005:

August - Iran accuses Britain and the USA of fomenting ethnic strife in the oil rich region of Khuzestan near the Iraqi border. Clashes there in recent months have left several dead. [15]

September - British troops in Basra, Iraq, raid a police station to free two British commandos who were arrested whilst dressed as Arabs and in possession of bomb making materials. This region of Iraq neighbours the Khuzestan region of Iran..... [16]

Iran resumes uranium conversion experiments. Under pressure from the governments of the USA, Britain, France and Germany, this move is condemned by the IAEA, but despite reports to the contrary, Iran has not yet breached any binding international agreements including the Nuclear Non- proliferation Treaty (NPT). The IAEA's own reports confirm this. [17] [18]

2006:

February - Despite there being no evidence of Iran having breached the NPT the US government succeeds in getting them referred to the UN Security Council. [17] [19]

March - A top US military official says he has no evidence that the Iranian government has been sending military equipment and personnel into neighboring Iraq. This in stark contrast to claims made by President Bush and Defense Secretary Rumsfeld. [48]

April - Iran announces that it has successfully enriched uranium on a small scale. There remains no sign of the alleged weapons program. [20]

The Russian government refuses to agree to sanctions against Iran until there is proof of Iran having a nuclear weapons program. [21]

The US government is again accused of running covert operations in Iran aimed at destabilising the country. [22]

The British government is advised by Foreign Office lawyers that it would be illegal to support military action against Iran. Jack Straw, the UK Foreign Minister, declares military action to be "inconceivable". [23]

Iran says it is prepared to fully cooperate with the IAEA, but wants its case removed from the UN Security Council's jurisdiction. US government says this is insufficient. The IAEA is still unable to find any evidence of a weapons program. Contrary to various media reports no deadline is issued by the Security Council for Iran to halt uranium enrichment. Many fear that the US government is fabricating this "crisis" as a prelude to war. [24] [25] [26] [27] [28]

June - Iran's president Ahmadinejad is widely misquoted in the western media as having said Israel should be "wiped off the map". He didn't. [29]

July - UN Security Council passes resolution giving Iran one month to suspend uranium enrichment. Iran rejects the move. [32]

September - The IAEA publicly criticises US report on Iran's nuclear aims, calling parts of it "outrageous and dishonest". [33]

The US government issue orders for a major "strike group" of ships to be sent to the Persian Gulf, just off Iran's western coast. [34] US covert ops are already said to be underway within Iran. [35]

October - British patrols in Iraq say that, contrary to US allegations, they have found no evidence that Iran is supplying or training insurgents in Iraq. [36]

Ships from the US, Britain, France, Italy, Australia and Bahrain, participate in a naval exercise in the Persian Gulf. [37]

November - Iran bears little resemblance to its portrayal in the western media. [38]

A CIA assessment finds no firm evidence of a secret drive by Iran to develop nuclear weapons, as alleged by the White House. The White House dismisses the report. [39] [42]

The US government is reportedly supporting Kurdish rebels in Iran in order to destabilise the country. [40]

Iran agrees to give the IAEA access to equipment and records from two of its nuclear sites. [41]

December - Iran hosts a conference on the Holocaust. [43]

Iran's parliament votes to revise its ties with the IAEA after the UN Security Council imposes limited sanctions on Iran for its refusal to cease uranium enrichment. [44]

The US and British governments send more warships to the Persian Gulf. [45]

2007:

January - Israel prepares for a possible attack upon Iran. [46]

US forces storm an Iranian consulate in Iraq, alleging involvement in supporting insurgent forces. [47]

The US and Israeli governments are again reported to be supporting Kurdish rebels in Iran in order to put the government of Iran under pressure. [49] [50]

Summary

1941: Britain and Soviets invade.

1950: UK profiting from oil.

1951: Mossadegh elected. Oil nationalised. UK plans coup.

1952: UK asks US to help coup.

1953: UK & US coup brings in brutal dictatorship of Shah.

1954: US & UK share oil rights.

1972: US helps arm Kurds in Iraq.

1973: US has Iran aid Afghanistan.

1975: US and Shah betray Kurds.

1979: Revolution overthrows Shah. US encourages Iraq to attack Iran.

1980-1988: Iraq attacks Iran. US and others ruthlessly feed brutal war. Iraq uses chemical weapons. US & UK arm both sides. US navy acts against Iran and kills civilians.

1993 onwards: US accuses Iran of supporting terrorism, seeking nuclear arms etc., all without proof and often contrary to evidence.

2005: US & UK fomenting strife?

2006-2007: US & UK warships in Gulf. US supporting rebels in Iran.

Iraq

Summary

1921-1922: UK creates Kuwait.

1932: Nominal independence.

1958-1963: Revolution. US tries to remove new leader.

1963: Bloody CIA aided coup.

1968: CIA helps Ba'ath party to take power.

1972-1979: US works against Iraq and betrays Kurds.

1979: Hussein comes to power.

1980-1988: At prompting of US, Iraq attacks Iran. US and others ruthlessly feed brutal war. US & UK arm both sides.

1988: Iran & Iraq agree cease fire.

1988-1990: Kuwaiti actions lead to invasion by Iraq. US blocks a diplomatic resolution.

1991-2002: US & UK attack. US betrays Iraqis & Kurds. US & UK follow war crimes with genocidal sanctions.

2003 onwards: New US & UK war and occupation is brutal, resistance is everywhere. Hussein is captured and executed. Vast numbers die or flee. Western companies get rich.

Lebanon

1941:

July - An armistice is signed at Acre after French and British forces defeat the Vichy government in Lebanon. [6]

November - After considerable national and international pressure, France declares Lebanon independent. [6]

1943:

September - Bishara al Khuri is elected as Lebanon's first president. [6]

November - The Lebanese government abolishes the French mandate. In response the French arrest a number of politicians including the president and prime minister. After much internal and international pressure the prisoners are released on November 22nd, which the Lebanese thereafter celebrate as Independence Day. [6]

The National Pact establishes that the government shall have a balance of representatives from the Maronite Christian, the Sunni Muslim and the Shia Muslim communities. [6]

1946:

December - The last French troops leave. [6]

1952:

September - The Social National Front (SNF) led by Kamal Jumblatt, head of the Progressive Socialist Party; Camille Chamoun, former ambassador to Britain; Emile Bustani, a self-made millionaire businessman;

and other prominent personalities, calls for a general strike to force President Khuri to resign. He finally does so on September 18th. [6]

The CIA apparently aids the election of president Camille Chamoun. [3]

1952-1957:

The Chamoun government insists on maintaining ties with the West despite pressures from the Muslim community to form more ties with the Arab nations, especially after the attack on Egypt by Britain, France and Israel in 1956. [6]

1957:

June - The CIA supplies money to Chamoun to use in the support of candidates in the Chamber of Deputies (Parliament) June elections. There is a landslide victory for pro-government deputies. Now deprived of a legal platform from which to voice their opinions, leaders with pan-Arab sympathies turn to extralegal means, starting with demonstrations. [3] [6]

September - The US sends its Sixth Fleet to the Mediterranean and sends arms and other military equipment to Jordan, Lebanon, Iraq, Turkey and Saudi Arabia, in an attempt to goad Syria into military action. [3]

1958:

May - The inordinate pro-USA stance of Chamoun's government leads to violent protests and armed rebellion in some parts of the country. The US sends its Sixth Fleet to the region again and police supplies as well as tanks and other heavy equipment are airlifted into Lebanon. Syria and Egypt support the rebels with arms, men and money. [3] [6]

July - Chamoun invokes the Eisenhower Doctrine, calling on the US for help in fighting the rebels. The Eisenhower Doctrine is supposed to be for combatting "aggression from any country controlled by international communism". Communism is playing no real part in the insurrection in Lebanon, but the US sends troops anyway. Some 70 naval vessels and hundreds of aircraft are employed in the operation. By August 14,000 US troops are in Lebanon, more than the entire Lebanese Army and gendarmerie combined.

[1] [2] [3] [6]

The US presence is unpopular with rebels and government supporters alike and clashes nearly occur between government tank forces and US troops. [3]

The civil war increases in intensity after the arrival of the US forces and the CIA broadcasts propaganda by radio in an attempt to deflect anti-US feelings onto the Soviet Union and others. [3]

After the Chamber of Deputies chooses General Chehab to succeed Chamoun as president in September the fighting subsides. Tension is further reduced by the US announcing its intention to withdraw. [3]

President Chehab (or Shihab) restored balance in the Chamber of Deputies and observed the terms of the National Pact. One of his first acts was to ask the US to withdraw its troops. [6]

October - The last US troops leave Lebanon without having fired a shot in anger. [3]

1964:

August - President Chehab is succeeded by Charles Hilu (or Helou). [6]

1967:

June - Lebanon does not participate in the Arab-Israeli war, but there are repercussions for Lebanon. Most significantly the Palestinian guerilla groups take an increased role in the struggle with Israel and many of them use Lebanon as a base. Their presence creates tensions because most of the Muslim groups want to support them and most of the Christian groups do not. [6]

1968:

December - Israel attacks Beirut International Airport. [6]

1969:

Periodic clashes between the guerrillas and the Lebanese Army continue throughout the late spring, summer and autumn. In the late summer, several guerrilla groups move to new bases, better located for attacks against Israel. Israel regularly raids these bases in reprisal for guerrilla raids. [6]

October - The Lebanese Army attacks some guerrilla camps in order to restrict their activity, an action that leads to several demonstrations in support of the guerrillas. [6]

November - The Lebanese commander in chief and Yasir Arafat, the head of Al Fatah, the leading faction within the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), agree in Cairo to a cease-fire. The secret Cairo Agreement sets limits on Palestinian guerrilla operations in Lebanon and helps to restore calm. [6]

The Lebanese government's efforts to curtail guerrilla activities continue through late 1969 and 1970.

Migration from southern Lebanon, particularly of large numbers of Shias, increases, primarily because of inadequate security against Israeli shelling and raids along with lack of economic opportunity. In Beirut the migrants, estimated to exceed 30,000, often can not find adequate shelter and meet with indifference on the part of predominantly Christian military leaders. These problems result in occasional clashes between the migrants and government forces. [6]

1970:

January - The government announces a plan to arm and train Lebanese civilians in southern villages and to fortify the villages against Israeli raids. This action is apparently the result of an intentional government policy to avoid committing the army to action in southern Lebanon, presumably for fear of polarizing the religious groups that compose the army. [6]

After the army's commander is replaced clashes between the army and the guerrillas recur, but southern Lebanese villagers continue to protest governmental inaction. [6]

May - After several bloody clashes between the guerrillas and the Lebanese Army and a nationwide general strike in May, the government approves additional appropriations for the defense of the south, and it presses the guerrillas to abide by the Cairo Agreement and to limit their activity. [6]

August - Sulayman Franjiyah (or Franjeh) is elected president. [6]

1971:

Large numbers of Palestinian guerrillas are expelled from Jordan in late 1970 and 1971. Many of the guerrillas enter Lebanon, seeing it as the most suitable base for launching raids against Israel. They ally themselves with existing Lebanese groups or form new ones and receive support from the Lebanese Muslim community and further splintering arises in the Lebanese body politic. Clashes between the Palestinians and Lebanese right-wing groups, as well as demonstrations on behalf of the guerrillas, occur during the latter half of 1971. PLO head Arafat holds discussions with leading Lebanese government figures, to establish acceptable limits of guerrilla activity in Lebanon under the 1969 Cairo Agreement. [6]

1972:

April - The Chamber of Deputies elections are accompanied by violence. The high rate of inflation and unemployment, as well as guerrilla actions and retaliations, occasions demonstrations, and the government declares martial law in some areas. The government attempts to quiet the unrest by taking legal action against the protesters, by initiating new social and economic programs, and by negotiating with the guerrilla groups. However, the pattern of guerrilla infiltration followed by Israeli counterattacks continues. Israel retaliates for any incursion by guerrillas and for any action anywhere against Israeli nationals. [6]

September - An Israeli incursion into southern Lebanon is made in retaliation for the massacre of Israeli Olympic athletes in Munich. [6]

1973:

April - In an Israeli commando raid on Beirut three leaders of the Palestinian Resistance Movement are assassinated. The army's inaction brings the immediate resignation of Prime Minister Saib Salam, a Sunni Muslim leader from Beirut. [6]

May - Armed clashes between the army and the guerrillas in Beirut spread to other parts of the country, resulting in the arrival of guerrilla reinforcements from Syria, the declaration of martial law, and a new secret agreement limiting guerrilla activity. [6]

October - Lebanon does not take part in the Arab-Israeli war, but it deeply affects the country's subsequent history. As the PLO's military influence in the south grows, so too does the disaffection of the Shia community that lives there, which is exposed to varying degrees of unsympathetic Lebanese control, indifferent or antipathetic PLO attitudes, and hostile Israeli actions. The Franjiyah government proves less and less able to deal with these rising tensions. [6]

1975:

April - Gunmen kill four Phalangists during an attempt to kill Phalangist leader Pierre Jumayyil in Beirut. Perhaps believing the assassins to be Palestinian, the Phalangists retaliate later in the day by attacking a bus carrying Palestinian passengers across a Christian neighborhood, killing about twenty-six of the occupants. Street fighting between Phalangists and Palestinian militiamen intensifies the following day. With the government not able to agree on how to act the fighting spreads to other areas of the country, becoming a civil war. [6]

Those in favour of maintaining the status quo come to be known as the Lebanese Front. The groups include primarily the Maronite militias of the Jumayyil, Shamun, and Franjiyah clans, often led by the sons of zuama. Also in this camp are various militias of Maronite religious orders. The side seeking change, usually referred to as the Lebanese National Movement, is far less cohesive and organized. For the most part it is led by Kamal Jumblatt and includes a variety of militias from leftist organizations and guerrillas from rejectionist Palestinian (nonmainstream PLO) organizations. [6]

By the end of the year no side holds a decisive military advantage. The political hierarchy, composed of the old zuama and politicians, is still incapable of maintaining peace, except for occasional, short-lived cease-fires. Reform has been discussed, but little headway has been made toward any significant improvements. Syria, deeply concerned about the flow of events in Lebanon, has also proved powerless to enforce calm through diplomatic means. And the Lebanese Army, which has generally stayed out of the strife, begins to show signs of factionalizing and threatens to bring its heavy weaponry to bear on the conflict. [6]

1976:

January - The Syrian government organises a ceasefire and sets up the High Military Committee through which it negotiates with all sides. Battles between the Lebanese Front and Palestinians hamper these efforts. The Lebanese Front lays siege to the Palestinian refugee camp of Tall Zatar in East Beirut and overruns and levels Karantia, a Muslim quarter in East Beirut. This brings the main forces of the PLO, the Palestinian Liberation Army (PLA) into the battle. Together with the Lebanese National Movement they take the town of Ad Damur, a Shamun stronghold south of Beirut. [6]

February - Syria helps negotiate a seventeen point reform program known as the Constitutional Document. [6]

March - The Syrian led peace process is derailed when dissident Muslim troops in the Lebanese Army mutiny, creating the Arab Army. They join with the Lebanese National Movement in an assault on Christian held Beirut and attack the presidential palace forcing Franjiyah to flee to Mount Lebanon. [6]

May - Rejecting the proposed successor to Franjiyah chosen by the Chamber of Deputies, the Lebanese National Movement successfully presses assaults on Mount Lebanon and other Christian controlled areas. [6]

Seeking to end a conflict likely to result in an undesirable outcome for Syria whoever won, Syria intervenes militarily against the Lebanese National Movement. Syrian forces meet strong resistance and suffer many casualties. Syria is also condemned by much of the Arab world by fighting for the Christian side. [6]

July - Syria launches a renewed assault against the Lebanese National Movement, subduing most opposition within two weeks. [6]

October - Rather than completely crushing the Lebanese National Movement, Syria takes part in an Arab peace conference held in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. This conference and a following one in Cairo, formally end

the Civil War. The underlying causes are not eliminated, but fullscale warfare is ended. Syrian forces remain in Lebanon as part of the Arab Deterrent Force (ADF) established by the Arab League. [6]

1977:

January - The ADF now constists of 30,000 men. 27,000 of these are Syrian, the rest being from a mixture of Arab states and Sudan. Difficulties in reforming the Lebanese army lead to the ADF's mandate being renewed several times. [6]

The human cost of the war is estimated to be nearly 44,000 dead and 180,000 wounded, with many thousands more displaced or homeless. Much of the once magnificent city of Beirut is reduced to rubble and the town is divided into Muslim and Christian sectors, separated by the so called Green Line. [6]

Fighting in the South between the Christian militia backed by Israel and Palestinian forces backed by Syria, goes on to cause large scale destruction and causes the migration of about 200,000 people, one third of the population. [6]

August - The Shtawrah Accord calls for the Palestinians to withdraw 15 kilometers from the Israeli border, with this area to be occupied by the Lebanese Army, with the ADF protecting the southern coastal area. Execution of the agreement, however, is difficult because neither the Palestinians nor the Lebanese Army wish to make the first move, and Israel doesn't want increased Syrian influence in the area. [6]

1978:

February - Relations between Lebanon and Syria deteriorate further when fighting occurs between the ADF and the Lebanese Army in East Beirut. [6]

March - Israeli forces invade southern Lebanon after a Palestinian guerilla attack on a bus near Tel Aviv in which several people are killed. Over 25,000 Israeli troops occupy positions as far north as the Litani River and remain for 3 months. The UN calls for Israel to withdraw and the UN Interim Force in Lebanon is sent to replace them in stages. [6]

June - When Israel withdraws from southern Lebanon, Major Saad Haddad's Christian militia, the South Lebanon Army (SLA), takes over most of the areas Israel had controlled. [6]

July - The ADF begins to bombard Christian sectors of Beirut. [6]

October - Syrian bombardment of East Beirut ends after a UN Security Council cease fire resolution indirectly implicates Syria as a party to the civil war. [6]

1979:

May - After a relatively cordial meeting between presidents Sarkis and Assad in Damascus, Syria states that the ADF, which has become a totally Syrian force, will "remain in Lebanon as long as the Arab interests so require." [6]

1980:

From early this year Syria has become increasingly preoccupied with its domestic difficulties, leaving the Sarkis administration with a freer hand. However, significant ADF action against the Phalange Party militia, the now dominant Christian militia, headed by Bashir Jumayyil, takes place around Zahlah (fifty kilometers east of Beirut) late in the year. [6]

1981:

April - After further ADF action against the Phalange Party militia, an ally of Israel, Israel intervenes, shooting down two Syrian helicopters over Lebanon. Syria then introduces SA-2 and SA-6 surface-to-air missiles into Lebanon. The situation is in danger of escalating but this is averted and Israel's support for the Lebanese front is curtailed. [6]

September - An escalation in violence leads to automobile bombings in West Beirut, Sidon and Tripoli. [6]

1982:

April - Attacks are made against Muslim and Christian religious leaders. The increasing violence leads to calls for the Lebanese Army to intervene. The unrest is seen as an opportunity for Bashir Jumayyil to put himself forward as a presidential candidate. However, Bashir's close ties to Israel and his proposals for

eliminating both the ADF and the PLA from the Lebanese scene are understandably met with sharp opposition from Assad and Arafat, both of whom considered Jumayyil's brother Amin more acceptable. [6] **June** - Israel invades Lebanon with US backing. About 20,000 people are killed, plus about 25,000 in the following years. Israel's excuse is the attempted assassination of its ambassador in London by the terrorist group led by Abu Nidal. The real purpose is to destroy the PLO and install a friendly regime in Lebanon. UN attempts to stop the aggression of Israel are blocked by US vetoes. [5] [6]

The Israeli cabinet authorized the invasion, called Operation Peace for Galilee, but it set strict limits on the extent of the incursion. The IDF was to advance no farther than forty kilometers, the operation was to last only twenty-four hours, Syrian forces were not to be attacked, and Beirut was not to be approached. [6] First IDF aircraft bomb Palestinian targets in West Beirut. The PLO responds by resuming artillery fire on Israeli settlements in northern Galilee. IDF ground forces then enter Lebanon. Only the PLO resists the invasion, since other groups feel they have suffered under Palestinian domination, this gives credence to Israel's claim that they are "liberating" Lebanon. [6]

Palestinian resistance to the invasion proves strong and Israeli forces abandon any attempts at avoiding civilian casualties, saturation bombing refugee camps in the vicinity of Tyre and Sidon. [6]

Israeli forces then go on to attack Syrian forces, to cut off the Beirut-Damascus highway. The Israelis destroy 17 of Syria's 19 anti-aircraft batteries and about 80 aircraft, with little loss on their side. On June 11th, after international pressure, Israel and Syria agree to a truce. [6]

Israel then lays siege to Beirut for 70 days, employing a relentless barrage of air, naval and artillery bombardment, resulting in appalling civilian casualties. After negotiations an international peace keeping force was deployed in Beirut as PLO forces evacuated to Cyprus and Damascus. [6]

August - Bashir Jumayyil is elected president of Lebanon. [6]

September - US marines withdraw from Beirut followed by the rest of the peace keeping forces. The Lebanese army begins to move into West Beirut and the Israelis withdraw from the front lines. [6]

On 14th September Jumayyil is assassinated in a huge explosion and his brother Amin is elected president. [6]

On 16th September the IDF surrounds the Palestinian refugee camps of Sabra and Shatila. They then direct the massacre of 700 to 800 Palestinian men, women and children by mainly Phalangist militiamen. [6]

At the behest of the Lebanese government, the Multinational Force (MNF) is deployed again in Beirut, to separate the IDF from the Lebanese population. They enable the Lebanese government to regain control and start rebuilding Beirut. [6]

October - President Jumayyil delcares Beirut reunited and the barricades along the Green Line that had been in place since 1975 are demolished. [6]

Ariel Sharon is removed from his post as Israeli Minister of Defense because of his role in the Sabra and Shatila massacres. The Israeli forces then withdraw to the outskirt of Beirut. [6]

1983:

April - A terrorist attack destroys the US embassy. [6]

May - Israel and Lebanon sign an agreement halting the war. Israeli forces are to withdraw and the security of Israel's northern border is to be provided for. But the agreement is contingent on Syria's withdrawal, although Syria has not been consulted. Syria refuses to withdraw. [6]

Now they are no longer fighting the Israeli forces the various Lebanese factions start to fight each other again. US forces, present as part of the MNF, also come under attack, as their presence is now seen as an interference. [6]

September - After Israeli forces withdraw from the Shuf Mountains region, Phalangist and Druze militias resume their conflict there. The Phalangists are routed and retreat to Dayr al Qamar where they and its Christian residents are besieged. In the surrounding region the Druze massacre about 1,500 Christian civilians. [6]

In Suq al Gharb and Khaldah the Lebanese Army fights the Druze militias. The US helps the Lebanese Army retain control of Suq al Gharb by having its ships shell Druze positions until a cease fire is declared. [6]

This hollow victory leaves the Lebanese Army discredited and some Druze members, including officers, defect to join the Druze militias. The US Congress then adopts a resolution to continue its military presence in support of the Lebanese government. [6]

1984:

February - Shia Amal militiamen clash with the Lebanese Army in southern Beirut, gain control of Beirut International Airport, evict the army from West Beirut and reestablish the Green Line partitioning the capital. After this the Lebanese Army slowly disintegrates as its soldiers defect. US Marines stationed near the airport are left surrounded by mostly Shia militia groups and as Lebanon sinks into violence Britain, France, Italy and the US decide to withdraw their MNF forces. [6]

1985:

February - Residents of Sidon celebrate as Israel withdraws its forces south of the Litani River. Sidons factions avoid violence by agreeing to have a contingent of the Lebanese Army take over Israeli positions. [6]

March - A bomb explodes outside a mosque, killing about 80 people, mostly women and girls, and wounding over 200 more. The bombing was organised by the CIA and Saudi agents with the assistance of Britain's MI6. The intention was to kill Sheikh Fadlallah a Shia leader accused of complicity in terrorism. He escaped. [4] [5]

The withdrawal of the MNF leaves Syria as the dominant force in Lebanon. Syria has Jumayyil abrogate the May 1983 agreement with Israel which required Syria to withdraw. [6]

Peace in Sidon is shortlived as a Palestinian-Druze-Shia coalition fights the Phalangists. The Phalangists are defeated and thousands of Christian civilians retreat behind Israeli lines or east to Jazzin. [6]

Guerilla attacks against Israel resume and Israel responds with merciless strikes on villages. [6]

April - Under Syria's aegis, the Shia Amal organization attempts to consolidate its control over West Beirut. They rout the Sunni Murabitun militia, then lay seige to the Palestinian refugee camps of Abra, Shatila and Burj al Barajnah. The Palestinians retain control of the camps, but the seige continues on and off for another two years before Syrian forces disperse the Shias. [6]

June - A new security accord, the Bikfayya Agreement, is made. The armed forces are restructured with great Shia involvement and a cease fire is agreed with the withdrawal of militias from Beirut and the reopening of the airport and port. [6]

Israel withdraws its forces from Southern Lebanon; it closes its Ansar detention center and frees 752 inmates, but in violation of the Geneva Conventions, which forbids transporting prisoners of war across international boundaries, 1,200 prisoners are transferred to Israel. Israel establishes a security zone 5 to 10 kilometers wide, which it hands over to the SLA, with some 150 Israeli combat troops and 500 advisers. [6]

August-September - The Bikfayya Agreement fails to bring peace. Druze, Shia and Sunni militias fight in West Beirut and there are attacks on the Saudi Arabian embassy, the British embassy and the US embassy. Also Israeli forces conduct air raids on Palestinian guerilla camps. [6]

December - Syria brokers the Tripartite Accord signed by the leaders of Lebanon's three main militias: Nabih Birri of Amal, Walid Jumblatt of the Druze Progressive Socialist Party, and Hubayka of the LF. It is to bring an immediate ceasefire and the end of the civil war is to be declared within a year. The militias are to be disarmed and then disbanded, and sole responsibility for security is to be relegated to the reconstituted and religiously integrated Lebanese Army, supported by Syrian forces. More broadly, the accord envisages a "strategic integration" of the two countries in the spheres of military affairs, national security, and foreign relations. The accord also mandates fundamental, but not sweeping, political reform, including the establishment of a bicameral legislature and the elimination of the old confessional formula, which is to be replaced by majority rule and minority representation. [6]

Jumayyil refuses to endorse the agreement and fighting soon rages within the Christian camp. [6]

1986:

January - Syria retaliates against Jumayyil's forces, urging militias to attack the Christian areas. The Presidential Palace and Jumayyil's home town of Bikfayya are shelled, but the Christians close ranks and the Tripartite accord is never implemented. [6]

July - Samir Jaja announces the creation of the Free Lebanon Army, but is opposed LF loyalists. [6]
September - LF forces, supported by Syria, launch a surprise attack across the Green Line against Jaja's militiamen. Jaja's forces are driven back, but the invasion is halted by the intervention of the Lebanese Army and Air Force loyal to the president. [6]

1987:

February - Heavy fighting breaks out in West Beirut between Druze and Shia militias. Both forces use tanks, there are heavy casualties and much of West Beirut is set aflame. Syria intervenes, entering areas it has not controlled since driven out by Israel in 1982. Syrian troops close down seventy militia offices, deploy along major roads and at Beirut International Airport, establish checkpoints and patrol the streets. They also attack the headquarters of Hizballah in the Basta neighbourhood. [6]

April - Syrian troops fight alongside Lebanese Army troops to take up key positions south of Beirut along the coastal highway and take control of the bridge over the Awwali River, near Sidon. [6]

May - Lebanon abrogates the 1969 Cairo agreement with the PLO as well as officially cancelling the 17 May 1983 agreement with Israel.[7]

June - After Prime Minister Rashid Karami is killed when a bomb explodes in his helicopter, Salim al-Huss becomes acting prime minister. [7]

1988:

September - When no candidate is elected to succeed him, outgoing President Amin al-Jumayyil appoints a six-member interim military government, composed of three Christians and three Muslims, though the latter refuse to serve. Lebanon now has two governments - one mainly Muslim in West Beirut, headed by Al-Huss, the other, Christian, in East Beirut, led by the Maronite Commander-in-Chief of the Army, Gen Michel Awn. [7]

1989:

March - Awn declares a "war of liberation " against the Syrian presence in Lebanon. [7]

July - Shaykh Abd-al-Karim Ubayd, Hezbollah leader in Jibshit, is abducted by Israeli forces. [7]

October - The National Assembly, meeting in Ta'if, Saudi Arabia, endorses a Charter of National Reconciliation, which reduces the authority of the president by transferring executive power to the cabinet. The National Assembly now has an equal number of Christian and Muslim members instead of the previous six to five ratio. [7]

November - President-elect Rene Mu'awwad is assassinated on 22 November and succeeded by Ilyas al-Hirawi on 24 November. The following day, Salim al-Huss becomes prime minister and Gen Emile Lahoud replaces Awn as Commander-in-Chief of the Army on 28 November. [7]

1990:

October - The Syrian air force attacks the Presidential Palace at B'abda and Awn takes refuge in the French embassy. This date is regarded as the end of the civil war. [7]

December - Umar Karami heads a government of national reconciliation. [7]

1991:

The National Assembly orders the dissolution of all militias by 30 April but Hezbollah is allowed to remain active and the South Lebanon Army (SLA) refuses to disband. [7]

May - A Treaty of Brotherhood, Cooperation and Coordination is signed in Damascus by Lebanon and Syria and a Higher Council, co-chaired by their two presidents, is established. [7]

July - The Lebanese army defeats the PLO in Sidon so that it now confronts the Israelis and the SLA in Jazzin, north of the so-called "security zone". [7]

August - The National Assembly grants an amnesty for all crimes committed during the civil war, 1975-1990. Awn receives a presidential pardon and is allowed to leave for France. [7]

October - Lebanon participates in the Middle East Peace Conference launched in Madrid. [7]

1992:

February - Shaykh Abbas al-Musawi, Secretary-General of Hezbollah, is killed when Israeli helicopter gunships attack his motorcade on a road south-east of Sidon. [7]

June - By 17 June all Western hostages held by Shia groups have been released. [7]

October - After elections in August and September (the first since 1972), Nabih Birri, secretary-general of the Shia Amal organisation, becomes speaker of the National Assembly. [7]

Rafik Hariri, a rich businessman, born in Sidon but with Saudi Arabian nationality, becomes prime minister, heading a cabinet of technocrats. [7]

1993:

June - Hizballah fires rockets at Kiryat Shmonah causing some injury and damage. [8]

July - Attacks by Ahmad Jibril's Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine - General Council Command (PFLP-GC) and Hizballah cause the deaths of 5 IDF soldiers in the security zone. [8]

Israel attempts to destroy Hezbollah and the PFLP-GC by launching "Operation Accountability", an artillery and aerial bombardment against Shi'ite towns and villages, and the heaviest attack since 1982. It lasts one week after which a ceasefire is agreed. [7] [8]

Israeli forces violate the rules of war by attacking civilians and using weapons such as flechette shells and incendiaries. Hizballah also violates the rules of war by attacking civilians. The Israeli attack kills some 120 Lebanese civilians and injures about 500 more. Some 300,000 civilians are driven from their homes. 2 Israeli civilians are killed in retaliatory attacks by Hizballah. [9]

1994:

May - Mustafa Dib al-Dirani, head of the Believers' Resistance, a breakaway group from the Shia Amal organisation, is abducted by Israeli commandos from his house in eastern Lebanon. [7]

1996:

April - After a series of attacks by Israeli forces and Hizballah, Israel launches "Operation Grapes of Wrath". This entails air and artillery attacks against villages, towns in southern Beirut. This is followed by Israeli warships blockading Beirut, Sidon and Tyre. The attacks are not restricted to military targets and in one instance a helicopter gunship attacks an ambulance, killing 2 women and 4 children. In another instance a strike on a village kills a woman, here 7 children and a cousin. In another a makeshift refugee compound at a UNIFIL post at Qana is deliberately attacked killing more than 100 civilians. On 15th April over 700 shells and 30 air-to-surface missiles and bombs pour down in a four-hour period, in an area south east of Tyre. More than 400,000 Lebanese civilians are internally displaced. Hizballah responds with salvos of Katyusha rockets, which cause little damage. [9]

Israeli pilots carry out 600 air raids with fixed-wing aircraft and helicopters, and artillery units fire some 25,000 shells into Lebanese territory. Some 154 civilians are killed in Lebanon, and another 351 injured. The guerrillas fire 639 Katyusha rockets into Israel. There are no Israeli civilian deaths, although three Israeli women sustain serious injuries. [10]

A Truce is agreed on 26th April and is monitored by the Israel-Lebanon Monitoring Group (ILMG), with members from the US, France, Israel, Lebanon and Syria. [7]

1998:

April - Israel's inner cabinet votes to accept UN Security Council Resolution 425 of 1978 if Lebanon guarantees the security of Israel's northern border. Both Lebanon and Syria reject this condition. [7]

November - Army head Emile Lahoud is sworn in as president, succeeding Ilyas al-Hirawi. [7]

December - Salim al-Huss becomes prime minister heading a cabinet which includes no militia leaders and only two ministers from the previous administration. [7]

1999:

June - The South Lebanon Army (SLA) completes its withdrawal from the Jezzine salient (north of the "security zone") occupied since 1985. [7]

2000:

March - Israeli cabinet votes for the withdrawal of Israeli troops from southern Lebanon by July 2000. [7]

April - Israel releases 13 Lebanese prisoners held without trial for more than 10 years but extends the detention of Shaykh Abd-al-Karim Ubayd and Mustafa Dib al-Dirani. [7]

May - After the collapse of the SLA and the rapid advance of Hezbollah forces, Israel withdraws its troops from southern Lebanon, more than six weeks before its stated deadline of 7 July. [7]

25 May declared an annual public holiday, called "Resistance and Liberation Day". [7]

October - Rafik Hariri takes office as prime minister for a second time. [7]

2001:

March - Lebanon begins pumping water from a tributary of the River Jordan to supply a southern border village despite opposition from Israel. [7]

2002:

January - Elie Hobeika, a key figure in the massacres of Palestinian refugees in 1982, dies in a blast shortly after disclosing that he held videotapes and documents challenging Israel's account of the massacres. [7]

September - Row with Israel over Lebanon's plan to divert water from a border river. Israel says it cannot tolerate the diversion of the Wazzani, which provides 10% of its drinking water, and threatens the use of military force. [7]

2003:

August - Car bomb in Beirut kills a member of Hezbollah. Hezbollah and a government minister blame Israel for the blast. [7]

2004:

September - A UN Security Council resolution - aimed at Syria - demands that foreign troops leave Lebanon. Syria dismisses the move. [7]

Parliament extends President Lahoud's term by three years. Weeks of political deadlock end with the unexpected departure of Rafiq Hariri - who had at first opposed the extension - as prime minister. [7]

2005:

February - Former prime minister Rafik Hariri is killed by a car bomb in Beirut. The attack sparks anti-Syrian rallies and the resignation of Prime Minister Omar Karami's cabinet. Calls for Syria to withdraw its troops intensify. [7]

March - Hundreds of thousands of Lebanese attend pro- and anti-Syrian rallies in Beirut. [7]

Days after his resignation, pro-Syrian former PM Omar Karami is asked by the president to form a new government. [7]

April - Omar Karami resigns as PM after failing to form a government. He is succeeded by moderate pro-Syrian MP Najib Mikati. [7]

Syria says its forces have left Lebanon, as demanded by the UN. [7]

June Prominent journalist Samir Qasir, a critic of Syrian influence, is killed by a car bomb. [7]

Anti-Syrian alliance led by Saad Hariri wins control of parliament following elections. New parliament chooses Hariri ally, Fouad Siniora, as prime minister. [7]

George Hawi, anti-Syrian former leader of Lebanese Communist Party, is killed by a car bomb. [7]

July - Lebanese PM Siniora meets Syria's President Assad; both sides agree to rebuild relations. [7]

December - Prominent anti-Syrian MP and journalist Gibran Tueni is killed by a car bomb. [7]

2006:

February - Denmark's embassy in Beirut is torched during a demonstration against cartoons in a Danish paper satirising the Prophet Muhammad. [7]

July - Israel launches air and sea attacks on targets in Lebanon. Civilian casualties are high and the damage to civilian infrastructure wide-ranging. Thousands of people are displaced. [7] Israel claims the attack is in self defense and in response to the capture of two Israeli soldiers by Hezbollah, but it is soon revealed that the attack had been planned several years ago and that those plans had been shown to the US. In the attacks Israel targets bridges, roads, power plants, fuel depots, petrol stations, radio stations, factories, schools, hospitals, ambulances, warehouses, moving vehicles, churches, mosques and residential

homes. They use incendiary weapons and cluster munitions; the latter supplied by the USA along with aircraft and other weapons. Israeli ground forces later lay mines in southern Lebanon which remain after they withdraw. [11] [12] [15] [16] [17] [18] [19] [29] [31] [32] 1,200 Lebanese civilians are killed, 30% of them being children below the age of 12. [13] The US later refills stockpiles of US weapons in Israel which Israel used in their attack on Lebanon. [20]

August - Israeli ground troops thrust into southern Lebanon. [7]

A truce between Israel and Hezbollah comes into effect on 14 August after 34 days of fighting and the deaths of around 1,000 Lebanese - mostly civilians - and 159 Israelis, mainly soldiers. A UN peacekeeping force, expected to consist of 15,000 foreign troops, begins to deploy along the southern border. [7] Israeli forces met with strong resistance during the war and in the end failed to achieve their aim of defeating Hezbollah and driving them north of the Litani river in southern Lebanon. The US aided Israel's assault not only by supplying Israeli forces but also by blocking international calls for a ceasefire, because they too wanted Hezbollah to be defeated. The US only began to back ceasefire calls when it became apparent that Israel was not going to achieve its aims. [22] [23] [24]

Of the 4 million cluster bomblets dropped by Israeli forces, about 1 million are thought to have not exploded. These continue to cause death and injury, mostly to children. [25]

September - Lebanese government forces deploy along the Israeli border for the first time in decades. [7]

October - Israel is criticised for repeatedly violating Lebanese airspace. [14]

November - Ministers from Hezbollah and the Amal movement resign shortly before the cabinet approves draft UN plans for a tribunal to try suspects in the killing of the former prime minister Hariri. [7]

Leading Christian politician and government minister Pierre Gemayel is shot dead. [7]

December - Thousands of opposition demonstrators in Beirut demand the resignation of the government. A tent town springs up housing the sit-in protestors. [7]

2007:

January - The Hezbollah led opposition steps up pressure on the government to resign by calling general strike. [7]

The CIA is authorised by the US government to take covert action against Hezbollah. [21]

May-September - The army lays seige to the Palestinian refugee camp Nahr al-Bared following clashes between militants and the military. More than 300 people die and 40,000 residents flee before the army gains control of the camp. [7] The Lebanese army is accused of abuses against the Palestinians of the camp. [30] The Sunni militant group Fatah al-Islam was formerly covertly supported by the US government via Saudi Arabia. [26] [27]

May - The UN Security Council votes to set up a tribunal to try suspects in the assassination of ex-premier Hariri. [7]

June - Anti-Syrian MP Walid Eido is killed in a bomb attack in Beirut. [7] [28]

September - Anti-Syrian MP Antoine Ghanim is killed by a car bomb. [7]

Parliament adjourns the session to elect a new president until 23 October, after a stay-away by the opposition pro-Syrian bloc. [7]

November - President Emile Lahoud steps down after parliament fails to elect his successor. Prime Minister Fouad Siniora says his cabinet will assume powers of presidency. [7]

December - A car bomb kills Gen Francois al-Hajj, who had been tipped to become army chief. [7]

2008:

January - A bomb blast apparently aimed at a US diplomatic vehicle in Beirut kills four. [7]

February - Hezbollah's Imad Mugniyah is murdered, apparently by Israeli forces. [33]

The US posts a warship off the coast of Lebanon to influence the political deadlock. [34]

April - Israeli jets continue to violate Lebanese airspace. [35]

May - At least 80 people are killed in clashes between Hezbollah and pro-government factions, sparking fears of civil war. [7]

Parliament elects army chief Michel Suleiman as president, ending six month long political deadlock. President Suleiman reappoints Fouad Siniora as prime minister at head of new unity government. [7] Hezbollah takes control of West Beirut and the airport after the government tries to shut down its communications network and sack the airport's head of security. The government subsequently backs down and Hezbollah withdraws its forces. [36] [37]

Rival leaders agree on formation of new government. [38]

June - Heavy fighting n Tripoli between rival groups. [39]

July - Unity government is formed. [40]

Hezbollah and Israel exchange prisoners and bodies. [41]

August - Lebanon and Syria agree to establish full diplomatic relations. [42]

Summary

1941-1943: Defeat of Vichy. Independence.

1946: French troops leave.

1952-1958: CIA interferes in government and sends forces.

1967-1973: Israel and Palestinians in Lebanon fight.

1975-1990: Civil war. Syria intervenes.

1978: Israel invades southern Lebanon. UN intervenes.

1982-1983: Israel invades with US backing. Civilians killed. Israel withdraws, internal strife resumes.

1984: Western forces withdraw.

1985: US, UK kill civilians. Factional fighting, guerilla and Israeli raids.

1987: Syria intervenes.

1993: Israel attempts to destroy Hezbollah. Many civilians killed.

1996: Israel attacks, killing many. Truce policed by ILMG.

2000: Israel withdraws.

2005: Syria withdraws.

2006: Israel attacks, US blocks peace. UN troops deployed.

Jordan

1921:

The Amirate of Transjordan is established under British patronage on the East Bank by the Hashimite prince Abdullah ibn Hussein Al Hashimi. The amirate's treasury operates on British financial aid established on the basis of an annual subsidy. A native civil service is gradually trained with British assistance, but government is simple, and Abdullah rules directly with a small executive council, much in the manner of a tribal shaykh. British officials handle the problems of defense, finance, and foreign policy, leaving internal political affairs to Abdullah. The population at this point is less than 400,000 people. [5]

1923:

Britain recognizes Transjordan as a national state preparing for independence. [5]

1928:

A new treaty relaxes British controls while still providing for Britain to oversee financial matters and foreign policy. [5]

1930:

With British help, Jordan launches a campaign to stamp out tribal raiding among the beduins. [5]

1934:

A new agreement with Britain allows Abdullah to set up consular representation in Arab countries. [5]

1939-1945:

Units of Jordan's Arab Legion serve with distinction alongside British forces in 1941 overthrowing the pro-Nazi Rashid Ali regime that had seized power in Iraq and defeating the Vichy French in Syria. Later, elements of the Arab Legion are used in guarding British installations in Egypt. [5]

1945:

Abdullah takes part in the inter-Arab preliminary discussions that result in the formation of the League of Arab States (Arab League) in Cairo in March. The original members of the League of Arab States are Transjordan, Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, and Yemen. [5]

1946:

Transjordan and Britain conclude the Treaty of London. Transjordan is proclaimed a kingdom, and a new constitution replaces the obsolete 1928 Organic Law. [5]

1948:

March - A further treaty with Britain removes all restrictions on sovereignty, although limited British base and transit rights in Transjordan continue, as does the British subsidy that pays for the Arab Legion. [5]

May - State of Israel created in British-mandate Palestine. Egypt, Transjordan, Syria, Lebanon and Iraq join the Arab guerillas in fighting against the Jews. About 500,000 Palestinians flee Arab-Israeli fighting to the West Bank and Jordan. Before this the population of Transjordan was about 340,000 and that of the West Bank about 500,000. [1] [5]

1949:

The end of the war with Israel leaves Transjordan in control of the West Bank and the Old City of Jerusalem. Abdullah changes the name of the country to Jordan. [5]

1950:

Jordan annexes the West Bank to make it part of Jordan, this is recognized only by Britain and Pakistan. Within the Arab League, the annexation is not generally approved, and traditionalists and modernists alike condemn the move as a furtherance of Hashimite dynastic ambitions. [1] [5]

United States military assistance to Jordan begins on a small scale. [5]

1951:

March - Jordan enters into an economic developmental aid agreement with the United States, under President Harry S Truman's Point Four program. [5]

20 July - King Abdullah assassinated in Jerusalem by a Palestinian assassin reportedly hired by relatives of Hajj Amin al Husayni, a former mufti of Jerusalem and a bitter enemy of Abdullah, who had spent World War II in Germany as a pro-Nazi Arab spokesman. Many radical Palestinians blamed Abdullah for the reverses of 1948. Abdullah's son Talal succeeded his as king. [1] [5]

1952:

11 August - Hussein is proclaimed king after his father, Talal, who suffered from periods of mental illness, was persuaded because of this to abdicate in favour of Hussein. As Hussein was not yet 18 years old a regency council act on his behalf. [1] [5]

1953:

Hussein reaches eighteen years old and returns from Britain, where he was attending the British Royal Military Academy at Sandhurst, to be crowned as king. [5]

1955:

Three days of demonstrations and rioting ensue after the new government of Hazza al Majali announces its intention that Jordan will join the Baghdad Pact. The Baghdad Pact was a Western creation and Arab nationalists want no part of it. The government resigns and Jordan does not join the Pact. [5]

1956:

Hussein, responding to the public reaction against joining the British-sponsored Baghdad Pact, attempts to show his independence from Britain by dismissing John Bagot Glubb as commander of the Arab Legion. Glubb's dismissal precipitates a diplomatic crisis that threatens to isolate Hussein from Britain. Relations are strained for many years although the British subsidy is not withdrawn. The Legion is renamed the Jordan Arab Army and British are phased out of the service. [5]

October - An Israeli task force, supported by aircraft and artillery, attacks the West Bank village of Qalqilyah, killing forty-eight persons in reprisal for a guerrilla attack in Israel. Palestinians clamour for war, and nationalist parties make gains in the parliamentary elections. [5]

After the British and French try, with the collusion of Israel, to seize control of the Suez Canal in Egypt, Hussein proposes that Jordan attack Israel at once but Nasser discourages him from wasting Jordan's forces in a war that by then was already lost. British participation in the attack on Egypt makes it politically imperative that Jordan end its special relationship with Britain. [5]

1957:

Under the Arab Solidarity Agreement that results from the Arab summit meeting in Cairo in January, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and Syria undertake to pay Jordan the equivalent of US\$35.8 million annually for ten years, with Saudi Arabia paying an amount equivalent to that paid by Egypt and Syria together. The money would effectively free Jordan from the British subsidy. Saudi Arabia, however, made only one quarterly payment; Egypt and Syria made no payments. The Anglo-Jordanian Agreement of March 1957 abrogates the basic Anglo-Jordanian Treaty of 1948, terminates the British subsidy, and initiates the turnover of British installations and the withdrawal of all British troops still in Jordan. [5]

January - The US sets up a covert working group in Beirut to plan to overthrow Nasser of Egypt. The group consists of representatives of the British, Iraqi, Jordanian and Lebanese intelligence services. [6]

April - Jordan's internal political scene was shaping up as a power struggle between the monarchy and the Nasserist Nabulsi government. Hussein and the conservatives suspect that Nabulsi is maneuvering to abolish the monarchy. Nabulsi begins negotiations to open diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union and obtain Soviet arms aid. As political tension increases, Hussein, exercising his constitutional prerogative, demands the resignation of the Nabulsi government. After some unrest Ibrahim Hashim, a Hussein loyalist, succeeds in forming a government and outlaws all political party activity. [5]

The U.S. rushes its 6th fleet to the eastern Mediterranean and lands a battalion of Marines in Lebanon to "prepare for possible future intervention in Jordan." Hussein declines such assistance. Later in the year, the CIA begins making secret payments of millions of dollars a year to Jordan's King Hussein. This continues for 20 years. The CIA also provides Hussein with female companions. In return Hussein supplies intelligence to the CIA. [4] [5] [6]

The United States becomes Jordan's principal source of military equipment following the termination of the British subsidy. [5]

Hussein has won a remarkable political victory. What matters most is the loyalty of the combat units of the army, and that loyalty clearly belongs to the king. But Jordan is beleaguered--Nasserites are arrayed against the king, the British subsidy is gone, the Arab Solidarity Agreement has evaporated, and the rift is wider than ever between the East Bank and the West Bank. To counteract these disabilities, Hussein unequivocally places his country in the Western camp and seeks a new source of aid--the United States. [5]

September - In response to the Syrian government's more nationalist and pro-Soviet policies, the U.S. rushes arms to allies Jordan, Lebanon, Iraq, Turkey and Saudi Arabia. This was despite the fact that 3

months earlier the US Department of Defence had concluded that "The USSR has shown no intention of direct intervention in any of the previous Mid-Eastern crises and we believe it is unlikely that they would intervene, directly, to assure the success of a leftist coup in Syria." [4] [6]

1958:

February - In response to Syria and Egypt uniting to form the United Arab Republic, Iraq and Jordan form an alliance called the Arab Union, with the US acting as midwife to the process. [5] [6]

July - 14th - A coup in Iraq overthrows the regime there and under its new leadership Iraq withdraws from the Arab Union and the Baghdad Pact. [5] [6]

Britain conducts military intervention in Jordan, flying troops into Amman, ostensibly to protect regime from alleged Egyptian-backed coup. Declassified documents suggest, however, that British planners fabricated the coup scenario to justify intervention. [2] [3] [5]

1960:

August - the pro-Western prime minister Hazza al Majali is killed by a bomb planted in his desk. But order is maintained and a new prime minister, Bahjat al Talhuni is appointed. The attack is traced to Syria and Egypt and four people are convicted and hanged. [5]

1961:

June - Talhuni is replaced by Wasfi al Tal to improve relations with Egypt. [5]

1964:

January - Alarmed by Israeli plans to take water from Lake Tiberias to irrigate the Negev Desert, Arab heads of state meet in Egypt to address the issue. Three courses of action are approved: the diversion of the tributary sources of the Jordan River north of Lake Tiberias in Lebanon and Syria; the establishment of the United Arab Command under an Egyptian commander; and the recognition of the new Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), headed by a former Jerusalem lawyer, Ahmad Shukayri (also cited as Shukairi), as the representative of Palestinian resistance against Israel. [5]

1965:

Trouble develops between Hussein's government and the PLO because the PLO attempts to assume quasi-governmental functions, such as taxing Palestinians and distributing arms to villagers in the West Bank and among the refugees, acts that infringed on Jordanian sovereignty. Jordanian policy since 1949 had been to avoid border incidents and terrorism that would generate Israeli reprisals. Al Fatah and the PLO, however, carry out raids and sabotage against Israel without clearance from either the United Arab Command or Jordan. These attacks, although planned in Syria, most often are launched into Israel by infiltration through Lebanon or Jordan. Israeli reprisals against selected West Bank targets become harsher and more frequent from May 1965 onward. [5]

Jordan buys a large amount of military ground force equipment from the US. [5]

May - Jordan and nine other Arab states break relations with the Federal Republic of Germany because of its recognition of Israel. [5]

August - Jordan and Saudi Arabia sign an agreement defining for the first time the boundary between the two countries. Under this agreement, Jordan gives up some territory in the southeast but is able to gain an extension of about eighteen kilometers down the gulf from the crowded port of Al Aqabah. [5]

1966:

July - when Hussein severs official endorsement and support for the PLO, both that organization and the Syrian government turn against him. In reprisal for the terrorist attacks by the fedayeen (Palestinian guerrillas), in November Israel assaults the West Bank village of As Samu. Israel is censured by the UN, but public rioting against the Jordanian government breaks out among the inhabitants of the West Bank. The levels of rioting exceeded any previous experience. As in the past, Hussein uses the army to restore public order. Political pressure against Hussein mounts, however, along with armed clashes on the Syria-Jordan border. [5]

1967:

April - 7th - A land and air battle takes place between Syria and Israel. Syria and Jordan criticise Egypt for not sending support. [5]

May - Egypt commences an extensive military build-up in Sinai in response to Syrian allegations that Syria is in imminent danger of invasion by Israel. Nasser declares a state of emergency on May 16 and two days later demands removal of the United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF) from Sinai, where it has served as a peacekeeping force since 1957. The UN secretary general acceded to Nasser's demand. [5]

23rd-24th - Nasser announces the closure to Israeli shipping of the Strait of Tiran at the entrance to the Gulf of Aqaba, a measure that Israel immediately declares to be an act of war. Hussein quickly decides that this time it would be impossible for Jordan to stay out of the impending conflict. He hurriedly proceeds to Cairo and on May 30 signs a military alliance with Egypt. Hussein's move represents a response to political pressures at home and the fulfillment of basic pan-Arab commitments. The alliance puts the Jordanian army under the field command of an Egyptian general officer. [5]

June - 5th - Israel launches an attack against Egyptian forces deployed in Sinai. The Israeli prime minister, Levi Eshkol, attempts in vain to contact Hussein through UN channels to keep him out of the war. The Egyptian field marshal in overall command of Arab forces orders Jordanian artillery to open fire on Israeli positions, and Jordan's small air force conducts a bombing raid in the Tel Aviv area. Within hours, however, Israeli warplanes effectively eliminate the Arab air forces on the ground. After only two days of combat, Jordan's main armored unit is defeated. Hard fighting continues, as Hussein is determined to hold as much ground as possible in the event that a cease-fire is arranged. By the time he agrees to a truce on June 7th, Israeli forces have seized the West Bank and the Old City of Jerusalem. [5]

Of all the Arab nations involved, Jordan, which could least afford it, loses most in the war. Government figures list over 6,000 troops killed or missing. During the short war, about 224,000 refugees--many of whom had first been refugees from the 1948-49 war--flee from the West Bank to the East Bank. One third to one half of the country's best agricultural land and its main tourist attractions are lost to Israel. On June 27, the Israeli parliament (Knesset) formally annexes the Old City of Jerusalem, an act that the United States and many other nations refuse to recognize. [1] [5]

August - In the wake of the War, Hussein's government faces the critical problems of repairing a shattered economy, providing for the welfare of the refugees, obtaining external aid, readjusting foreign policy, and rebuilding the armed forces. Internally, however, the major problem is the continuing confrontation with the several Palestinian guerrilla organizations. [5]

The Arab League heads of state meet in Khartoum at the end of August. The conference reaches four major decisions generally considered to represent the views of Arab moderates: resumption of oil production, which some oil-producing states had suspended during the war; continued nonrecognition of and nonnegotiation with Israel, individually and collectively; continued closure of the Suez Canal and the elimination of all foreign military bases in Arab territory; and provision of financial subsidies aid to Egypt and Jordan by Saudi Arabia, Libya, and Kuwait. The total annual subsidy promised for the indefinite future amounts to the equivalent of US\$378 million, of which Jordan is to receive about US\$112 million. Donor states at first regularly pay their shares in quarterly installments, but Libya and Kuwait withdraw their support to Jordan during the 1970-71 war between the Jordanian government and the fedayeen. [5]

In addition to the Khartoum subsidies, Jordan also receives grants from Qatar, and the shaykhdom of Abu Dhabi, and a special grant of US\$42 million from Saudi Arabia for arms purchases. Aid also comes from Britain and West Germany, with whom Jordan has resumed relations. Although direct United States aid has been terminated, substantial long-term government loans are extended to Jordan for emergency relief, development, and military assistance. [5]

Jordan orders F-104 Starfighter aircraft and support gear from the US. After the disastrous losses of military equipment during the June War, United States military aid, most of which had been supplied on a credit basis, is shifted to grant form. Additional purchases of American hardware are made possible by massive postwar financing from friendly Arab states. [5]

November - The UN Security Council adopts Resolution 242 as a guideline for a Middle East settlement. The principal provisions of the resolution proclaim the inadmissibility of territorial acquisition by war; withdrawal of Israeli forces from areas occupied in the June 1967 War; termination of all states of belligerency; acknowledgment of the sovereignty of all states in the area--including Israel--within secure and recognized boundaries; freedom of navigation on all international waterways in the area; and a just settlement of the refugee problem. Whilst Jordan, Egypt, and Israel all accepted this resolution in principle Israel does not actually comply, and never relinquishes the territories it has seized. [5] At first by conviction and then by political necessity, Hussein seeks accommodation with the fedayeen and provides training sites and assistance. In Jordan's internal politics, however, the main issue between 1967 and 1971 is the struggle between the government and the guerrilla organizations for political control of the country. Based in the refugee camps, the fedayeen virtually develop a state within a state, easily obtaining funds and arms from both the Arab states and Eastern Europe and openly flouting Jordanian law. [5]

1968:

February - The United States resumes arms shipments to Jordan. [5]

March - An Israeli brigade attacks the Jordanian village of Al Karamah, said to be the guerrilla capital. Although the brigade inflicts damage, it is driven back and in the process suffers substantial losses. The incident boosts Palestinian morale and gives the PLO instant prestige within the Arab community. [5]

June - Israel launches a heavy attack on Irbid. [5]

August - Israel launches a heavy attack on As Salt. [5]

November - By late 1968, the main fedayeen activities in Jordan seem to shift from fighting Israel to attempts to overthrow Hussein. A major guerrilla-government confrontation occurs when the government seeks to disarm the refugee camps, but civil war was averted by a compromise that favours the Palestinians. The threat to Hussein's authority and the heavy Israeli reprisals that follow each guerrilla attack become a matter of grave concern to the King. [5]

1969:

February - Arafat (who remains the leader of Al Fatah) becomes head of the PLO. [5]

1970:

By early 1970, at least seven guerrilla organizations are identified in Jordan. One of the most important organizations is the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) led by George Habash. Although the PLO tries to integrate these various groups and announces from time to time that this process has occurred, they are never effectively united. [5]

Hussein's loyal beduin army attempts to suppress guerrilla activity, which leads to sporadic outbursts of fighting between the fedayeen and the army during the first half of 1970. [5]

June - An Arab mediation committee intervenes to halt two weeks of serious fighting between the two sides. Hussein then designates Abd al Munim Rifai to head a "reconciliation" cabinet. Rifai and Arafat sign an agreement conciliatory to the fedayeen. According to its provisions, the government allows the commandos freedom of movement within Jordan, agrees to refrain from antiguerilla action, and expresses its support for the fedayeen in the battle against Israel. In return, the commandos pledge to remove their bases from Amman and other major cities, to withdraw armed personnel from the Jordanian capital, and to show respect for law and order. [5]

September - Small-scale clashes with the fedayeen continue throughout the summer and by early September, the guerrilla groups control several strategic positions in Jordan, including the oil refinery near Az Zarqa. Meanwhile, the fedayeen are also calling for a general strike of the Jordanian population and are organizing a civil disobedience campaign. The situation becomes explosive when, as part of a guerrilla campaign to undermine the Jarring peace talks to which Egypt, Israel, and Jordan have agreed, the PFLP launched an airplane hijacking campaign. [5]

Within the space of two hours on September 6, PFLP gangs hijack a TWA jet, a Swissair jet, and make an unsuccessful attempt to seize control of an El Al airplane. About two hours later, another PFLP group hijacks a Pan Am jet and forces the crew to fly to Beirut airport, where the airplane lands almost out of fuel. The

next day the airliner is flown to the Cairo airport, where it is blown up seconds after the 176 passengers and crew have completed their three-minute forced evacuation. [5]

In response, on September 16 Hussein reaffirms martial law and names Brigadier Muhammad Daud to head a cabinet composed of army officers. At the same time, the king appoints Field Marshal Habis al Majali, a fiercely proroyalist beduin, commander in chief of the armed forces and military governor of Jordan. Hussein gives Majali full powers to implement the martial law regulations and to quell the fedayeen. The new government immediately orders the fedayeen to lay down their arms and to evacuate the cities. On the same day, Arafat becomes supreme commander of the Palestine Liberation Army (PLA), the regular military force of the PLO. [5]

During a bitterly fought ten-day civil war, primarily between the PLA and Jordan Arab Army, Syria sends about 200 tanks to aid the fedayeen. On September 17, however, Iraq begins a rapid withdrawal of its 12,000-man force stationed near Az Zarqa. The United States Navy dispatches the Sixth Fleet to the eastern Mediterranean, and Israel undertakes "precautionary military deployments" to aid Hussein, if necessary, against the guerrilla forces. [5]

With U.S. and Israeli backing, Jordanian troops attack Palestinian guerrilla camps, while Jordan's U.S.-supplied air force drops napalm from above. U.S. deploys the aircraft carrier Independence and six destroyers off the coast of Lebanon and readies troops in Turkey to support the assault. The U.S. threatens to use nuclear weapons against the Soviet Union if it intervenes. 5,000 Palestinians are killed and 20,000 wounded. This massacre comes to be known as "Black September." [1] [4] [5]

Under attack from the Jordanian army and in response to outside pressures, the Syrian forces begin to withdraw from Jordan on September 24, having lost more than half their armour in fighting with the Jordanians. The fedayeen find themselves on the defensive throughout Jordan and agree on September 25 to a cease-fire. At the urging of the Arab heads of state, Hussein and Arafat sign the cease-fire agreement in Cairo on September 27. The agreement calls for rapid withdrawal of the guerrilla forces from Jordanian cities and towns to positions "appropriate" for continuing the battle with Israel and for the release of prisoners by both sides. [5]

October - 13th - Hussein and Arafat sign a further agreement in Amman, under which the fedayeen are to recognize Jordanian sovereignty and the king's authority, to withdraw their armed forces from towns and villages, and to refrain from carrying arms outside their camps. In return the government agrees to grant amnesty to the fedayeen for incidents that occurred during the civil war. [5]

In spite of the September and October agreements, fighting continues, particularly in Amman, Irbid, and Jarash, where guerrilla forces have their main bases. [5]

1971:

April - Persistent pressure by the army compels the fedayeen to withdraw from Amman. Feeling its existence threatened, Al Fatah abandons its earlier posture of noninvolvement in the internal affairs of an Arab state and issues a statement demanding the overthrow of the Jordanian "puppet separatist authority." In a subsequent early May statement, it calls for "national rule" in Jordan. Against this background of threats to his authority, Hussein strikes at the remaining guerrilla forces in Jordan. [5]

June - In response to rumours that the PLO is planning to form a government-in-exile, Hussein in early June directed Tal, the prime minister, to "deal conclusively and without hesitation with the plotters who want to establish a separate Palestinian state and destroy the unity of the Jordanian and Palestinian people." [5]

July - 13th - The Jordanian army undertakes an offensive against fedayeen bases about fifty kilometers northwest of Amman in the Ajlun area--the fedayeen's last stronghold. Tal announces that the Cairo and Amman agreements, which have regulated relations between the fedayeen and the Jordanian governments, are no longer operative. On 19th the government announces that the remainder of the bases in northern Jordan have been destroyed and that 2,300 of the 2,500 fedayeen have been arrested. A few days later, many of the captured Palestinians are released either to leave for other Arab countries or to return to a peaceful life in Jordan. Hussein becomes virtually isolated from the rest of the Arab world, which accuses him of harsh treatment of the fedayeen and denounces him as being responsible for the deaths of so many of his fellow Arabs. [5]

November - Members of the Black September terrorist group--who took their name from the civil war of September 1970--avenge the deaths of fellow fedayeen by assassinating Prime Minister Tal in Cairo. [5]
December - The Black September group again strike out against Hussein in an unsuccessful attempt on the life of the Jordanian ambassador to Britain. Hussein alleges that Libya's Colonel Muammar al Qadhafi is involved in a plot to overthrow the monarchy. [5]

1972:

Attempted military coup thwarted. [1]

1973:

February - Hussein pays a state visit to the United States during which President Richard M. Nixon assures him of his "firm. . . support for Jordan" and promised increased economic and military aid. During interviews Hussein, who earlier had called for United States intervention to bring about a comprehensive Middle East settlement, reaffirms that he contemplates no partial or separate agreements with Israel that would be prejudicial to Arab unity, but he leaves the door open for bilateral talks and condemned the PLO for its divisive influence. On his return to Amman, Hussein reemphasizes that all of East Jerusalem must be returned but offers to put the holy places there under international supervision. [5]

March - Jordanian courts convict seventeen Black September fedayeen charged with plotting to kidnap the prime minister and other cabinet ministers and to hold them hostage in exchange for the release of a few hundred fedayeen captured during the civil war. Hussein subsequently commutes the death sentences to life imprisonment "for humanitarian reasons" and, in response to outside Arab pressures, in September releases the prisoners, including their leader Muhammad Daud Auda (also known as Abu Daud), under a general amnesty.[5]

September - At the Arab summit in Cairo a reconciliation mediated by King Faisal of Saudi Arabia takes place between Egypt, Syria, and Jordan, the "front-line" or confrontation states against Israel. [5]

October - 6th - Egyptian and Syrian armies launch simultaneous attacks across the Suez Canal and the Golan Heights that catch the Israelis by surprise. After initially threatening to break through Israel's inner defenses, the Syrians are checked and then thrown back by an Israeli counteroffensive that drives to within thirty kilometers of the strong defense emplacements surrounding Damascus. By October 10, Jordan mobilizes nearly 70,000 men, forcing Israeli troops to deploy in the West Bank. Hussein does not open a third front against Israel but he sends 3,000 Jordanian troops in two armoured brigades to the Golan front on October 13, and they see limited action under Syrian command in fighting near Lake Tiberias. More than 25,000 regular Palestinian troops also are engaged under separate command.[5]

21st - With the Arab armies in retreat, the Soviet Union calls a special session of the UN Security Council to impose an immediate cease-fire. Although accepted by Israel and Egypt, the cease-fire does not become effective for another three days. On the northern front, Israeli troops retain control of the Golan Heights, and in the southwest they have opened bridgeheads across the Suez Canal and occupied more than 1,500 square kilometers of territory in Egypt. UN Security Council Resolution 338, submitted on October 22, reiterates the Security Council's position on Israeli-occupied territory, first expressed in Resolution 242 in 1967. [5]

November - At a postmortem on the fourth Arab-Israeli war held in Algiers, the Jordanian representative stresses that the ceasefire does not mean peace and calls again for Israel to evacuate the occupied territories that combined Arab forces have failed to win back in battle. Over Jordanian protests, the summit conference votes to recognize the PLO as the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. Hussein, who concedes in Amman that he does not claim to speak for the Palestinians, supports their right to self determination --"but," he adds, "only after the occupied territories are liberated." [5]

1974:

October - The Rabat Summit conference brings together the leaders of twenty Arab states, including Hussein. The conference formally acknowledges the right of the Palestinian people to a separate homeland, but without specifying that its territory is restricted to the West Bank. Most importantly, the PLO is for the first time officially recognized by all the Arab states as the "sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian

people." The Arab heads of state also call for close cooperation between the front-line states and the PLO but prohibit interference by other Arab states in Palestinian affairs. Hussein agrees to this under intense Arab pressure and after the Arab oil-producing states promise to provide Jordan with an annual subsidy of \$US300 million. The PLO, along with the rest of the Arab world, views Hussein's consent at Rabat as a renunciation of Jordanian claims to the West Bank. Hussein nonetheless continues to have aspirations concerning Jordanian control of the occupied territories. The wide gulf separating the two views is the major source of tension between the PLO and Jordan throughout the late 1970s and early 1980s. [5]

The tone of Hussein's approach to the Palestinians in the East Bank changes markedly following the Rabat Summit. He advises that the resident Palestinians, estimated at 900,000 or more, must choose between Jordanian citizenship or Palestinian identity. No attempt will be made to oust those who chose the latter, he says, and they will be permitted to remain in Jordan as "guests." He also insists that any Palestinian choosing to keep his Jordanian citizenship must be allowed to do so without endangering his rights in the West Bank; he further promises that any Palestinian living in the East Bank who chooses to identify his interests with those of the "Palestinian people" can do so without jeopardizing his rights as a Jordanian citizen. [5]

November - The UN recognizes PLO representation of the Palestinian people. President Gerald R. Ford of the United States and General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Leonid Brezhnev acknowledge the "legitimate interests" of the Palestinians in accordance with the UN resolutions. [5] Hussein amends the constitution to give the king authority to dissolve the House of Representatives and to delay elections as he sees fit. He dissolves the lower house of the National Assembly, the elected House of Representatives, when it has completed its work on November 23. The House of Representatives, half of whose sixty members represented West Bank constituencies, can no longer function without undermining the newly recognized representative status of the PLO. The Constitution is amended to provide for the indefinite postponement of elections for a new House of Representatives so as to avoid elections on the East Bank alone, which if held would symbolize the final separation of the West Bank from Jordan. In addition to dissolving the House of Representatives, Hussein directs Prime Minister Zaid ar Rifai to form a new government that does not include Palestinians from the West Bank. No move is made, however, to relieve Palestinians in the Jordanian army, where they compose one-third of the officer corps, albeit mostly in noncombatant functions. The government also continues to pay the salaries of 6,000 civil servants and teachers in the West Bank, which amounts to about US\$40 million a year. [5]

1975:

As a result of Hussein's partial reversal from the commitments made at Rabat, Jordanian-PLO relations deteriorate throughout much of 1975. At the year's end, however, the Palestine National Council, meeting in Damascus, backs an effort to reconcile its differences with Hussein. The broadcast of antiregime propaganda is temporarily suspended and, although PLA units remain stationed in Jordan in military camps, the PLO accepts restrictions on its political and military presence there. [5]

During 1975 Jordan and Syria agree to coordinate their defense, foreign policy, economic, information, education, and cultural activities. They establish a joint military command to provide a single defensive line against Israel. Syria halts anti-Hussein propaganda and imposes restrictions on Syrian-based Palestinian activities that might be considered prejudicial to Jordan's sovereignty. [5]

In the spring, after a number of skirmishes with Lebanese Christian militias, the Palestinians in Lebanon allied with an array of leftist Lebanese forces and begin an offensive in Lebanon. [5]

1976:

January - At the Arab summit conference held at Cairo, Jordan and the PLO are once again embroiled in a dispute over Jordan's role in negotiating an Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank. Jordan declares that it has no responsibility for negotiating such a withdrawal. In response, the PLO resumes its hostile propaganda shortly after the meeting. [5]

February - Hussein summons an extraordinary session of the National Assembly, attended by about half of the representatives elected from the West Bank, to enact legislation enabling the king to postpone

indefinitely the general elections scheduled for later in the month. The king's spokespersons explain that the action is necessary because of "compelling circumstances" that prevail in the country. Hussein also abolishes the Jordanian National Union. [5]

Spring - President Assad of Syria, fearing a radical Palestinian force in Lebanon on Syria's southern border, enters the Lebanese civil war on the side of the Christians and tilts the military balance in their favour. Jordan supports the Syrian intervention, fearing that a Palestinian victory will give the PLO a base of operations from which to destabilize the region. [5]

July - Zaid ar Rifai, who has led the government since 1973, steps down as prime minister. Hussein replaces him with Mudar Badran, chief of the royal court. The Badran government sets up the Bureau of Occupied Homeland Affairs, headed by former members of parliament from West Bank constituencies, ostensibly to coordinate and advise on relations with Palestinians in Israeli-occupied territory. The government also conducts discussions on the renewed possibility of some form of federation between the West Bank and the East Bank. The PLO charges that the newly created Bureau of Occupied Homeland Affairs has been formed to channel support to pro-Jordanian candidates in municipal elections to be held in the West Bank in April 1977. Badran denies these allegations and reaffirms Jordan's commitment to the concept that the Palestinians themselves must decide the future of the West Bank. [5]

A UN draft resolution proposing to reaffirm the right of the Palestinians to self-determination, and including the right to establish an independent state, is vetoed in the Security Council by the United States, which calls instead for a "reasonable and acceptable definition of Palestinian interests." [5]

Since the early 1970s, Jordan had negotiated for the purchase of a US\$540 million air defense system from the United States to be financed by Saudi Arabia. When the United States Congress objects to the arms sale after strong pressure from the Israeli Embassy in Washington and American Jewish organizations, Hussein comments that relations with his one-time sponsor have reached "a sad crossroads." With Syrian encouragement, he travels to Moscow to sound out the Soviet Union on its willingness to provide a similar system. In the face of persuasive American and Saudi lobbying, Hussein eventually opts to purchase the American Improved Hawk air defense system. His trip to Moscow, however, marks a significant improvement in Jordanian-Soviet relations and is a factor in his decision to support the concept of a Middle East peace conference attended by both the Soviet Union and the United States. [5]

1977:

April - In municipal elections in the West Bank, PLO-backed candidates win an overwhelming victory. [5]

1978:

September - President Carter announces that the Camp David Accords have been reached. They consist of two parts, the Framework for Peace in the Middle East and the Framework for the Conclusion of a Peace Treaty between Israel and Egypt. [5]

The final version of the Camp David Accords signed by Egyptian president Sadat, Israeli prime minister Menachem Begin, and United States president Carter separate the issues of the future of the West Bank and the return of Sinai. Whereas the sections dealing with the return of Sinai are very explicit, the sections on the West Bank are vague and open to various interpretations. They called for Egypt, Israel, and "the representatives of the Palestinian people to negotiate about the future of the West Bank and Gaza." A five-year period of "transitional autonomy" is called for "to ensure a peaceful and orderly transfer of authority." The agreement also calls for peace talks between Israel and its other Arab neighbors, particularly Syria. [5]

The Camp David Accords fall far short of meeting even Jordan's minimal demands. Hussein expresses anger that Jordan is included in the Camp David framework without his prior knowledge or approval. He views the division of the accords into two agreements with no linkage between Israel's withdrawal from Sinai and progress on the Palestinian issue as a sign that Sadat is more interested in regaining Sinai than in brokering a viable peace settlement on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Hussein is further alienated from the Camp David peace process because Israel refuses to negotiate over East Jerusalem, insists on its rights

to establish settlements in the occupied territories, and reserves the right to demand sovereignty over those areas at the end of the transition period. [5]

November - Following the signing of the Camp David Accords, Jordan accepts an Iraqi invitation, accompanied by a US\$30 million Iraqi grant, to attend the Baghdad Conference. The summit conference's decision to allot to Jordan the relatively large sum of US\$1.25 billion per year helps keep Jordan in the Arab fold. At the Conference the Arab states unequivocally reject the Camp David Accords and officially ostracised Egypt from the Arab League. [5]

Hussein, although fully backing the Baghdad accords, seeks a very different objective than Arab states such as Syria and Iraq. His goal is not to punish Egypt or overthrow Sadat, but rather to set up an alternative strategy to the Camp David framework supported by an Arab consensus that would provide a more equitable and viable solution to the Middle East conflict. The essence of the Jordanian alternative is to return the Palestinian problem either to the UN Security Council or to the Geneva Conference where all the relevant parties, including the United States, the Soviet Union, and the European Economic Community, could work together in reaching a comprehensive Middle East peace plan. [5]

1979:

Jordan seeks to acquire F-16 fighter aircraft and approximately 300 M-60 tanks from the US. A much reduced shipment of 100 M-60 tanks is eventually made available to Jordan but without important modern features such as night sights and advanced fire control. Hussein accordingly turns to Britain for Chieftain tanks and modernization kits for Jordan's existing Centurion tanks, and to France for Mirage aircraft as substitutes for the F-16s. [5]

February - The overthrow of the shah of Iran causes grave concern in Amman. Not only is Hussein a monarch allied with the West, but he also has been a close ally of the shah for many years. [5]

March - The Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty is signed. [5]

April - The Israeli government's limited view of Palestinian autonomy becomes apparent. The Begin government approves two new settlements between Ram Allah and Nablus, establishes civilian regional councils for the Jewish settlements in the territories, and prepares autonomy plans in which Israel will keep exclusive control over the West Bank's water, communications, roads, public order, and immigration into the territories. The acceleration of settlements, the growth of an increasingly militaristic Jewish settler movement, and Israel's stated desire to retain complete control over resources in the territories precludes the participation in the peace process of either moderate Palestinians, such as the newly formed National Guidance Committee composed of West Bank mayors, or of Hussein. The PLO refused from the beginning to participate in the peace process. [5]

In response to the Egypt-Israel peace treaty Jordan severs diplomatic relations with Egypt. The Jordanian media and public officials intensify anti-Israel rhetoric, showing particular hostility toward the United States for supporting the accords. [5]

November - Hussein's attempt to develop a united Arab stand does not succeed. At the Tunis Summit, in the face of strong Syrian objections, Hussein is unable to mobilize an Arab consensus behind an alternative to the Camp David Accords. Syrian president Assad's strong objections to Hussein's proposal mark the beginning of rapid deterioration in Syrian-Jordanian relations. Hussein is further rebuffed when Assad revives the Steadfastness and Confrontation Front consisting of Syria, Libya, Algeria, the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (South Yemen), and the PLO. The Syrian leader accuses Jordan of supporting Syrian elements of the Muslim Brotherhood, which has been involved in a series of attacks against his regime. Although Syria continues to be a major Soviet ally in the Middle East, Jordan joins nearly the entire Arab world in condemning the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Finally, Syria, unlike Jordan, is unwilling to participate in any alternative to the Camp David Accords. [5]

1980s:

Hussein alters Jordan's Arab alignments in response to the new regional balance of power caused by the Islamic Revolution in Iran, the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty, and the growing rift with Syria. The focus of Jordan's new regional outlook is improved relations with Iraq. With Egypt no longer in the Arab fold, Jordan

seeks an Arab military alliance capable of deterring a more militaristic regime in Israel from meddling in Jordanian affairs. Hussein also needs Iraqi support to stave off the Syrian threat, which has grown significantly during 1980. Finally, Baghdad and Amman fear the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and its implications for the regional balance of power. [5]

After a series of high-level meetings in the early 1980s, a wide range of exchanges take place. Iraq greatly increases economic assistance to Jordan and discusses a possible project for supplying Jordan with water from the Euphrates. The start of the Iran-Iraq War in September 1980 further tightens relations. From the beginning of the war, Jordan is the most outspoken of the Arab states supporting Iraq. The Iraqi connection becomes increasingly important as tensions mount between Jordan and Syria. Between September 1980 and late 1981, Jordan reportedly receives US\$400 million in economic aid from Iraq. [5]

The crucial event for the Jordanian economy, as it was for the Arab world as a whole, was the quadrupling of world oil prices that followed the October 1973 War. Possessing little oil of its own, Jordan nonetheless became inexorably linked to the volatile world oil market. Between 1973 and 1981, direct Arab budget support rose more than sixteen-fold, from US\$71.8 million to US\$1.179 billion. In the same period, the value of Jordanian exports jumped almost thirteen-fold, from US\$57.6 million to US\$734.9 million. In addition, Jordan sent to the Persian Gulf states an estimated 350,000 doctors, engineers, teachers, and construction workers who by 1981 had sent back home more than US\$1 billion. Even after deducting the outward flow of dinars from the 125,000 foreign workers inside Jordan holding agricultural and unskilled jobs, net worker remittances rose from US\$15 million in 1970 to US\$900 million in 1981 [5]

When world oil prices begin spiraling downward in the early 1980s, the government halts many large-scale construction projects, slashes food and other subsidies, and significantly reduces public employment. These actions stir public dissatisfaction. [5]

Hussein's response to the rise in public discontent is to ease restrictions on the political process. Two political parties are formed: the Arab Constitutional Alignment and the Arab National Party. Both parties call for greater public participation in the affairs of state. [5]

1981:

Syrian-Jordanian relations deteriorate and nearly erupt in military conflict during the 1981 Arab summit conference in Amman, when Syrian president Hafiz al Assad accuses Hussein of aiding the antigovernment Muslim Brotherhood in Syria. [5]

October - An Iraqi-Jordanian Joint Committee for Economic and Technical Cooperation is set up. [5]

November - Jordan's improved status in the Arab world results in Amman hosting its first Arab summit.

Hussein reportedly hopes to obtain a breakthrough on the Palestinian question and to mobilize support for the Iraqi war effort. The summit, however, is boycotted by members of the Steadfastness and Confrontation Front led by Syria. In addition, Syria masses troops on the Jordanian border. Hussein counters by mobilizing a force of equal strength on the Syrian border. Although the situation is eventually diffused through Saudi mediation efforts, the potential for future Syrian-Jordanian conflict remains. [5]

1982:

January - Jordan's most demonstrative act of support for the Iraqi war effort occurs when Hussein announces the formation of the Yarmuk Brigade, a Jordanian force of volunteers that pledge to fight for Iraq. [5]

Throughout 1982, as Iran scores significant victories in the Iran-Iraq War, Jordan substantially increases its support to Iraq. Al Aqabah replaces the besieged Iraqi port of Basra as Iraq's major marine transportation point. [5]

June - Israel invades Lebanon, destroying the PLO bases there. Hussein views the Lebanon invasion as part of a pattern of more aggressive Israeli policies that include the 1981 bombing of the Iraqi nuclear reactor, confrontations with Syria, and an ambitious settlement policy in the occupied territories. The government of Menachem Begin is willing to use force to attain its territorial objectives. This leads to concerns that Israel might have designs on Jordan, or that the PLO, after having its major base of

operations in Lebanon destroyed, might attempt to reestablish itself in Jordan. Hussein also fears that Israeli settlement activity in the West Bank is rapidly reducing the chances of an acceptable settlement there. [5]

September - President Reagan launches the Reagan Plan. Hussein applauds the new American proposal, seeing in it a clear break from the Camp David framework. In announcing the new plan, Reagan states that "it is the firm view of the United States that self-government by the Palestinians of the West Bank and Gaza in association with Jordan offers the best chance for a durable and lasting peace," specifying that the United States will not support the establishment of a Palestinian state. The Reagan Plan also stresses UN Resolution 242, stating that the resolution applies to all fronts, including the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, and that the final status of Jerusalem should be decided through negotiation. [5]

October-November - Hussein and Arafat begin a series of meetings designed to formulate a joint response to the Reagan Plan. These negotiations center around the formation of a Jordanian-Palestinian delegation to future peace talks and, because neither Israel nor the United States recognized the PLO, on the extent to which the PLO will be directly associated with this delegation. Jordan proposes that the PLO appoint West Bank residents who are not members of the PLO to represent the Palestinians. In November, agreement is reached on the formation of a Higher Jordanian-Palestinian Committee headed by Prime Minister Mudar Badran and Arafat. [5]

Because of conflicting objectives sought by Arafat and Hussein, the joint Palestinian-Jordanian committee never materializes. Whereas Hussein sees the proposed confederation as a means to reestablish Jordanian control over the West Bank, Arafat views the negotiations as a means to gain PLO sovereignty over the occupied territories. In addition, Hussein and Arafat require evidence that Washington is willing to pressure Israel to make significant territorial concessions. Meanwhile, Israeli troops still occupy part of southern Lebanon, and the Israeli government has not made any commitments on the settlement issue. Moreover, given Iran's recent victories in its war with Iraq, tensions with Syria, and a depressed world oil market, Hussein can not isolate Jordan by unilaterally participating in the Reagan Plan without some show of Israeli flexibility. [5]

1983:

Syria has emerged from the war in Lebanon as a pivotal regional power, able and willing to play a role in the affairs of neighbouring Arab states. Whereas Syrian power is on the rise, Jordan's most powerful Arab ally, Iraq, seems to be losing the costly war with Iran. Hussein tries to counterbalance the Syrian threat by making overtures to President Husni Mubarak of Egypt. High-level talks between Egypt and Jordan occur regularly throughout 1983 and 1984. [5]

April - Following Hussein's decision in not to join the Reagan Plan, Jordan increasingly criticizes Washington's failure to apply pressure on Israel to halt settlements in the West Bank. [5]

May - United States-Jordanian relations are further strained when the Reagan administration lifts a ban on the sale of F-16 aircraft to Israel. The ban had been imposed to pressure Israel to withdraw its forces from Lebanon. [5]

July - The United States opposes a Jordanian draft resolution submitted to the UN Security Council asserting the illegality of Israeli settlement activity in the West Bank. [5]

November - Relations between Jordan and the USA are further soured by the signing of a new agreement on strategic cooperation between Israel and the United States. [5]

December - Jordan and Egypt signed a trade protocol and discuss the expansion of scientific and agricultural cooperation. [5]

1984:

Early in the year Ronald Reagan proposes selling 315 Stinger launchers and 1,600 missiles to Jordan but is forced to withdraw the proposal because of continued congressional opposition. [5]

September - Jordan officially announces the resumption of diplomatic relations with Egypt. [5]

1985:

The Reagan administration puts before Congress a new package valued at US\$1.9 billion, which would include 40 F-16s or F-20 aircraft, 300 advanced air-to-air missiles, 72 Stingers, and 32 Bradley infantry

fighting vehicles. The most controversial feature of the package is a proposal to upgrade the existing fixed Hawk batteries by converting them to mobile units and adding six new mobile Hawk batteries. Congress effectively blocks this transaction by setting conditions on the Jordanian-Israeli peace process that Hussein is unprepared to meet. [5]

1986:

Early in the year the US administration suspends indefinitely its efforts to supply major military systems to Jordan. Military assistance carries on at a pace adequate to sustain existing readiness levels by providing selective upgrading of equipment, together with training, spare parts, and service, and help in building up ammunition stocks. Close relationships continue to be maintained with the Jordanian military in spite of differences over new equipment items. The United States and Jordan go on to expand senior officer exchanges. The United States supplies technical assistance teams and instructor training programs, and develops specialized training courses tailored to Jordanian needs. Joint military exercises are also held annually on Jordanian territory. [5]

Hussein severs political links with the PLO and orders its main offices to shut. [1]

1988:

Hussein publicly backs the Palestinian uprising, or intifada, against Israeli rule. [1]

From 1950 through 1988, the United States furnished a total of about US\$1.5 billion in military aid, US\$878 million in loans and US\$631 million in grants. The grant program amounted to US\$26.5 million in FY 1988. [5]

1989:

Rioting in several cities over price increases. [1]

First general election since 1967, contested only by independent candidates because of the ban on political parties in 1963. [1]

1990:

Jordan comes under severe economic and diplomatic strain as a result of the Gulf crisis following Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. [1]

1994:

Jordan signs peace treaty with Israel, ending 46-year official state of war. [1]

1996:

Food price riots after subsidies removed under economic plan supervised by the International Monetary Fund. [1]

1997:

Parliamentary elections boycotted by several parties, associations and leading figures. [1]

1998:

King Hussein treated for lymphatic cancer in United States. [1]

1999:

January - After six months of treatment King Hussein returns home to a rousing welcome, but flies back to the US soon after for further treatment. [1]

February - King Hussein returns home and is put on a life support machine. He is pronounced dead on 7 February. More than 50 heads of state attend his funeral. [1]

7 February - Hussein's, son Crown Prince Abdullah ibn al-Hussein is sworn in as king. [1]

2000:

The CIA starts to use the headquarters of the General Intelligence Department in Amman as a secret prison. Here, at the CIA's behest, suspects, usually non-Jordanians, are held and tortured. They are then most often moved on to Guantanamo Bay or CIA prisons elsewhere in the world. [7]

September - A military court sentences six men to death for plotting attacks against Israeli and US targets.

[1]

2001:

March - King Abdullah and presidents Bashar al-Assad of Syria and Hosni Mubarak of Egypt inaugurate a \$300m (£207m) electricity line linking the grids of the three countries. [1]

2002:

January - Riots erupt in the southern town of Maan, the worst public disturbances in more than three years, following the death of a youth in custody. [1]

August - Spat with Qatar over a programme on Qatar-based Al-Jazeera TV which Jordan says insulted its royal family. Jordan shuts down Al-Jazeera's office in Amman and recalls its ambassador in Qatar. [1]

September - Jordan and Israel agree on a plan to pipe water from the Red Sea to the shrinking Dead Sea. The project, costing \$800m, is the two nations' biggest joint venture to date. [1]

October - Senior US diplomat Laurence Foley is gunned down outside his home in Amman, in the first assassination of a Western diplomat in Jordan. Scores of political activists are rounded up. [1]

2003:

June - First parliamentary elections under King Abdullah II. Independent candidates loyal to the king win two-thirds of the seats. [1]

September - Jordan's Central Bank retracts its decision to freeze accounts belonging to leaders of Hamas. [1]

October - A new cabinet is appointed following the resignation of Prime Minister Ali Abu al-Ragheb. Faisal al-Fayez is appointed prime minister. The king also appoints the three female ministers. [1]

2004:

February - Jordan's King Abdullah and Syrian President Bashar al-Assad launch the Wahdah Dam project at a ceremony on the River Yarmuk. [1]

March - Israel and Jordan agree a joint project to build a desert science centre on their shared border. [1]

April - Eight Islamic militants are sentenced to death for killing a US government official in 2002. [1]

Authorities seize cars filled with explosives and arrest several suspects said to be linked to al-Qaeda and planning chemical bomb attack on intelligence services HQ in Amman. [1]

Summary

1921: UK creates Transjordan.

1948-1949: "Sovereignty." Fighting Israel. Renamed Jordan.

1950: US military assistance.

1955: People block Baghdad Pact.

1956-1957: Distancing from UK.

1958: UK military intervention.

1965-1971: Tension with fedayeen.

1967: Six Day War. Territory lost.

1970-1971: Fedayeen driven out with US and Israeli help.

1973: Helping in war with Israel.

1974-1975: PLO tension.

1978: Camp David Accords.

1979: Arms from West.

1980s: Alliance with Iraq.

1986: Split with PLO.
1988: Backing the intifada.
1994: Peace treaty with Israel.
1996: IMF causes hardship.
2000: Torturing for the US.

Saudi Arabia

1932:

September - The areas controlled by Abd-al-Aziz are unified under the name Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Abd-al-Aziz is proclaimed King. [1]

1933:

King Abd-al-Aziz's eldest son, Saud, is named Crown Prince. [1]

1938:

Oil is discovered and production begins under the US-controlled Aramco (Arabian American Oil Company). [1]

1940-45:

Saudi Arabia is on the allied side during World War II, giving room for an US air base in Dhahran. [2]

1945:

The US State Department describes Saudi Arabian energy resources as "a stupendous source of strategic power, and one of the greatest material prizes in world history." [12]

1947:

British planners describe Saudi oil as "a vital prize for any power interested in world influence or domination." [11]

1951:

A new agreement with Aramco (Arabian American Oil Company), gives Saudi Arabia 50% of all earnings from the oil, as Aramco starts paying tax to Saudi Arabia instead of to the US government. [2]

1953:

November - King Abd-al-Aziz dies and is succeeded by the Crown Prince Saud Bin-Abd-al-Aziz Al Saud. The new King's brother, Faysal is named Crown Prince. [1]

1956:

Loan of US\$10 million is given to Egypt after their assets are frozen in connection with the Suez situation. After the British, French and Israeli attack on Egypt in October and November, Saudi Arabia reduced its economical and political relationship to both countries. [2]

1957:

As a result of a visit by King Saud to USA, relations with USA are enhanced. This especially involved increase in Saudi buys of US military equipment. Later this year Saudi Arabia declares that the Gulf of Aqaba is Saudi territory. [2]

The US enlists Saudi help in a coup plot against Nasser of Egypt. [14]

1958:

Change in the constitutional construction, where the king's absolute power is reduced, and legislative and executive powers are transferred to the prime minister. A couple of months later a cabinet system is introduced. [2]

1960:

Saudi Arabia is a founding member of OPEC (Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries). [1]

1962:

October - King Saud is forced to transfer effective power to his brother, Faisal. The background for this is Saud's total lack of control over economy. Faisal introduces a system of official institutions handling economical functions. — Relations with Egypt are severed after Egypt and Saudi Arabia support each other in the Yemeni revolution — Saudi Arabia supports the imam of Yemen. This conflict escalates to a level where Egypt went on to bomb Saudi towns. [2]

1963:

Saudi Arabia mobilizes its army after the deterioration of relations with Egypt. [2]

1964:

November - King Saud is deposed by his brother, the Crown Prince, Faysal Bin-Abd-al-Aziz Al Saud. [1]

1967:

With the foreplay to the Six Day War in 1967 Saudi Arabia expresses support for Egypt, and even sends 20,000 soldiers to help in the war. When Egypt later that year withdrew from Yemen, Saudi Arabia gave extensive help to Egypt. [2]

1970:

Saudi Arabia recognizes the government of Yemen, that now is controlled by the party that was supported by Egypt. [2]

The OIC (Organization of the Islamic Conference) is founded in Jiddah, Saudi Arabia. [1]

1972:

For the first time, Saudi Arabia gains control of a proportion (20 per cent) of Aramco lessening the control of the Americans over Saudi's oil. [1]

1973:

Saudi Arabia plays a leading role in a oil boycott against those Western countries that supported Israel in the Yom Kippur War. This resulted in oil prices four times higher than earlier. [2]

1974:

Threatening statements from US Defence Secretary prompts Saudis and Kuwaitis to mine their oil fields in preparation for a US invasion.[3] The issue of the oil boycott is however resolved entirely by diplomatic means. [14]

US companies and the US Treasury Department start planning for the modernisation of Saudi Arabia's infrastructure with the objectives of: maximising payouts to US firms and making Saudi Arabia increasingly dependent on the United States. [13]

Part of the plan is for the Saudis to guarantee to maintain oil supplies and prices at levels that could fluctuate but would always remain acceptable to the US and its allies. In exchange the US commit to provide to the House of Saud total and unequivocal political and if necessary military support, thereby ensuring their continued existence as the rulers of their country. Also as part of the deal the Saudis agree to use their wealth to purchase US government securities, the interest earned by these securities will be used, by the US Treasury, to modernise Saudi Arabia, using US companies. In short the US Treasury will use Saudi money to hire US companies to rebuild the Saudi infrastructure. The House of Saud is coerced and bribed into accepting the deal. [13]

One form of support the House of Saud receives from about this time onwards, is the training and support of the Saudi Arabian National Guard (SANG). Both the US and Britain provide this training. The SANG defend the royal family from social unrest and coups, ensuring they remain in power no matter what. [11]

1975:

King Faisal is murdered. Khalid becomes new king, but his weak health makes his half brother Fahd the true exercising power. [2]

1979:

With the signing of the Camp David agreement, Saudi Arabia cuts off its financial aid to Egypt. [2]

20th November - On this day, the first day in the Muslim calendar's year 1400, a group of Sunni Muslims barricades themselves inside the Holy Mosque of Mecca. They claim that the promised Mahdi is among them. They hold out for 15 days (until December 4) and it seems that as many as 200 are killed. The true identity of the rebels is still not fully known. [2]

1980s:

CIA Director William Casey arranges for Saudi Arabia to pay \$2 million to prevent the Communists achieving electoral gains in Italy. [14]

The US constructs a series of military communication systems "superbases" in Saudi Arabia. The Saudis foot nearly all the \$200 billion bill for these bases. [14]

The US has Saudi Arabia fund and support the mujahedeen fighting the Soviets in Afghanistan. They provide hundreds of millions of dollars each year, probably totaling more than a billion dollars. One of those mujahideen being Saudi national Osama bin Laden. Bin Laden is recruited by the CIA to help lead and raise funds for the mujahideen. [11] [13] [14] [16]

The U.S.-supported regimes in Kuwait and Saudi Arabia support Iraq's war effort [against Iran]. Kuwait contributes over \$30 billion. The U.S. sell over \$20 billion worth of arms to Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and other Gulf states during this period and allow Saudi Arabia to transfer large quantities of U.S. arms to Iraq during the war. [4] [14]

1980:

Saudi Arabia takes full control over Aramco. [2]

1981:

May - Saudi Arabia is a founder member of the GCC (Gulf Cooperation Council). [1]

1982:

King Khalid dies. He is succeeded by Fahd. [2]

1985:

UK signs first Al Yamamah deal with Saudi Arabia. Massive bribery and corruption is alleged during this deal and the second in 1988. As usual the appalling human rights record of Saudi Arabia is not an issue. [5] [6] [7] [8] [11] [15]

1987:

Saudi Arabia resumes diplomatic relations with Egypt, severed since 1979. [1]

31st July - 400 Iranian pilgrims are killed after clashes with Saudi security forces in Mecca. [2]

1988:

Second Al Yamamah deal with the UK is signed, the biggest arms deal ever, worth £50 billion. Again bribery and corruption is alleged. [5][6] [7] [8] [11]

The deal also allegedly included "electronic batons" used for torture. [9] [10]

1990:

July - 1,400 pilgrims dies after a bridge and tunnel accident. [2]

5th August - The Iraqi invasion of Kuwait is dramatic to Saudi politics and security. Saudi Arabia allows hundreds of thousands of foreign troops (mainly US) to be stationed on their own soil. [2]

Neither the US nor the Saudis consider it remotely likely that Iraq would invade Saudi Arabia, but US Defense Secretary Cheney flies to Riyadh and tells King Fahd that his country is in danger and needs US forces there to protect it. Saudi Arabia accepts the forces. [14]

The US pressures Saudi Arabia and others to support its motions against Iraq in the UN by having them give various perks to wavering nations. [14]

September - Bush tells congress that huge numbers of Iraqi troops and tanks are massing in Kuwait to threaten Saudi Arabia. Russian satellite pictures show nothing of the sort. [3]

1992:

Constitutional changes where a consultative council, shura, is established, along with a bill of rights and clear rules for succession for the king. [2]

Relations with Jordan deteriorate, as Jordan questions Saudi supremacy as protector of the Holy places. [2]

1993:

USA asks Saudi Arabia to pay for the Gulf War, that cost USA alone US\$51 billion. This comes at a time when the Saudi economy is facing severe problems, with budget deficits. [2]

1994:

Islamic dissident Osama Bin Laden is stripped of his Saudi nationality. [1]

1996:

MoD quietly sends first of several training teams to assist Saudi Arabia in 'internal security' as part of wider support to Saudi Arabian National Guard, the force that protects the ruling family. [11]

June - A bomb explodes at the US military complex near Dhahran killing 19 and wounding over 300. It is deemed probable that those responsible had fought in the US sponsored war in Afghanistan. Those the US had trained had turned upon them. [1] [16]

1997:

July - King Fahd increases the members of the Consultative Council (majlis al-shura) from sixty to ninety. [1]

1999:

October - Twenty Saudi women attend a session of the Consultative Council for the first time. [1]

2000:

September - The London-based human rights group Amnesty International describes Saudi Arabia's treatment of women, particularly foreign domestic workers, as "untenable" by any legal or moral standard. [1]

2001:

March - Several British workers are arrested in Riyadh after a series of blasts in which a British and an American national are killed. [1]

April - Saudi Arabia and Iran sign a major security accord to combat terrorism, drug-trafficking and organised crime. [1]

11th September - Fifteen of the 19 hijackers involved in attacks on New York and Washington are Saudi nationals. [1] [15]

After the attacks and whilst all other flights are grounded, private jets fly wealthy Saudi Arabians, including members of the bin Laden family out of the US. None of them are questioned. [13] [15]

November - Tony Blair hails Saudi Arabia as "a good friend in the international coalition against terrorism." Still no mention of human rights. [11]

December - King Fahd calls for the eradication of terrorism, saying it is prohibited by Islam; government takes the unprecedented step of issuing identity cards to women. [1]

2002:

February - A British man arrested in Riyadh after the March 2001 bombings claims the Saudi authorities tortured him and forced a confession. The man, Ron Jones, had been released after being allowed to retract his confession. [1]

May - New criminal justice system comes into force. Revised criminal code includes ban on torture and right of suspects to legal representation, but human rights campaigners allege that violations continue. [1]

August - Saudi investors reported to have withdrawn funds from the US in protest at a lawsuit filed by relatives of some September 11 victims alleging Saudi collusion with terror; Saudis allege defamation. [1]

October - Border crossing with Iraq reopens for the first time since Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in 1990. [1]

November - Saudi foreign minister says his country will not allow the US to use its facilities to attack Iraq, even in a UN-sanctioned strike.[1]

2003:

April - US says it will pull out almost all its troops from Saudi Arabia, ending a military presence dating back to the 1991 Gulf war. Both countries stress that they will remain allies. [1]

May - Suicide bombers kill 35 people at housing compounds for Westerners in Riyadh hours before US Secretary of State Colin Powell flies in for planned visit. [1]

One of the compounds bombed is that of the Vinnell Corporation, which provides retired US military officers "to train the elite armed forces that protect the royal family." [12]

September - More than 300 Saudi intellectuals - women as well as men - sign petition calling for far-reaching political reforms. [1]

October - Government says elections for 14 municipal councils will be held within a year - the first elections of any kind since the founding of the kingdom. [1]

Police break up unprecedented rally in centre of Riyadh calling for political reform. More than 270 people are arrested. [1]

November - Suicide attack by suspected al-Qaeda militants on residential compound in Riyadh leaves 17 dead and scores injured. [1]

King grants wider powers to Consultative Council (majlis al-shura), enabling it to propose legislation without his permission. [1]

2004:

January - Kingdom says it is prepared to negotiate substantial reduction of Iraq's debt. [1]

February - Stampede at Hajj pilgrimage leaves 251 dead. [1]

April - Four police officers and a security officer killed in attacks near Riyadh. Car bomb at security forces' HQ in Riyadh kills four, wounds 148. Group linked to al-Qaeda claims responsibility. [1]

May - Attack at petrochemical site in Yanbu kills five foreigners. Attack and hostage-taking at oil company compound in Khobar; 22 people are killed. [1]

Files are seized by British Ministry of Defence police alleging corruption on a massive scale by Britain's biggest arms firm, BAE Systems. Payments totalling more than £60m to prominent Saudis are listed, a far greater amount than has been previously alleged.

BAE is currently trying to secure another £1.5bn of arms deals from the Saudi regime, following the sale of planes, missiles and warships worth £50bn to them over the past 15 years. [17]

June - Three gun attacks in Riyadh within a week leave two Americans and a BBC cameraman dead. The same week, a US engineer is abducted and beheaded, his filmed death causing revulsion in America. [1] Security forces kill local al-Qaeda leader Abdul Aziz al-Muqrin shortly afterwards, but an amnesty for militants which follows has only limited effect despite a fall in militant activity. [1]

December - Attack on US consulate in Jeddah; five staff and four attackers are killed. [1]

2005:

February-April - First-ever nationwide municipal elections. Women do not take part in the poll. [1]

August - Saudi royal court announces death of King Fahd. He is succeeded by the former crown prince, Abdullah. [1]

November - World Trade Organization gives the green light to Saudi Arabia's membership following 12 years of talks. [1]

2006:

June - Six men allegedly linked to al-Qaeda are killed in a shootout with police in Riyadh, the latest of several incidents involving Islamist militants. [1]

November - Saudi Arabia threatens to suspend diplomatic ties with Britain unless Downing Street intervenes to block an investigation into a £60m "slush fund" allegedly set up for some members of its royal family, to ensure the Saudis continued to buy from BAE under the so-called Al-Yamamah deal, rather than going to another country. Al-Yamamah is the biggest defence contract in British history and has kept BAE in business for 20 years. [18]

Summary

1932: Saudi Arabia formed.

1938: Oil discovered. US control it.

1956-1957: France & UK not favoured, US is.

1973: West boycotted.

1974: US guaranteed oil & Saudi dependence. US & UK train SANG.

1980s: Funding US interventions. US military bases.

1980: Control of oil production.

1985: First UK Al Yamamah deal.

1987: Egypt relations resumed.

1988: UK Al Yamamah deal.

1990: Supporting US against Iraq.

1993: Paying US for Gulf War.

1996: UK & SANG. US base bomb.

2000: Abuse of foreign workers.

2001: US protects bin Ladens and others after 9/11. UK supports.

2002: No support for war on Iraq.

2003: US to withdraw troops.

2004: UK investigates arms deals.

Kuwait

1921-1922:

In order to weaken Arab nationalism, Britain blocks Iraqi access to the Persian Gulf by severing the territorial entity, "Kuwait" from the rest of Iraq. [3]

1932:

A mass movement of Kuwaiti youth called the "Free Kuwaiti Movement" defies British rule and submits a petition requesting the Iraqi government to reunify Kuwait and Iraq. [3]

1937:

Large oil reserves discovered by the US-British Kuwait Oil Company. Exploitation is delayed by World War II, but thereafter fuels the country's development into a modern commercial centre. [1]

1938:

Fearing an uprising, the Kuwaiti Sheik agrees to the establishment of a legislative council to represent the "Free Kuwaitis." The first meeting of the council in 1938 results in a unanimous resolution demanding that Kuwait revert back to Iraq. [3]

1939:

March-April - A popular uprising within Kuwait to reunify with Iraq erupts on March 10, 1939. The Kuwaiti Sheik, with British military support and "advisers," crushes the uprising, and kills or imprisons its participants. King Ghazi of Iraq publicly demands the release of the prisoners and warns the Sheik to end the repression of the Free Kuwaiti Movement. Ghazi ignores warnings by Britain to discontinue such public statements, and on April 5, 1939, he is found dead. It is widely assumed that he was assassinated by British agents. Faisal II is an infant at this time, and Nuri es-Said, a former officer of the Ottoman Army with British loyalties, becomes the de facto leader of Iraq. [3]

1951:

Major public-works programme begins; Kuwait's infrastructure is transformed, residents enjoy a high standard of living. [1]

1955:

U.S. and Britain inaugurate the Baghdad Pact, an anti-Soviet security agreement for Middle Eastern nations, including Iraq. The Baghdad Pact is widely perceived in the Arab world as alliance of regimes subordinate to British and U.S. power, and it is greeted with popular protests and riots. Nuri es-Said responds to the protests by jailing opposition leaders who demand that Iraq withdraw from the pact. However, he also begins secret negotiations with the U.S. and Britain for the return of Kuwait to Iraq in order to placate Iraqi national sentiment. [3]

1958:

January-July - Iraqi Prime Minister Nuri es-Said addresses a meeting of the Baghdad Pact and publicly urges the return of Kuwait to Iraq. All pact members agree with the proposal, with the sole exception of Britain. Further diplomatic gestures from Iraq to Britain are rebuffed, and finally Iraq informs Britain that it is preparing documents and copies of secret understandings together with a formal memorandum, to be published before the world in July 1958. The British Ambassador responds to the Iraqi government that Great Britain had "approved in principle" the unification of Kuwait and Iraq, but requests a meeting in London with the Iraqi and British Prime Ministers and other government officials. But this meeting never takes place, because the Iraqi monarchy is overthrown on July 14, 1958 in a revolution led by General Abdel Karim Qassim. King Faisal II and Nuri es-Said are executed, and Britain immediately thereafter abrogates the agreement to return Kuwait to Iraq. [3]

1961:

June - Kuwait becomes independent with the end of the British protectorate; the sheikh becomes an emir. The country joins the Arab League. [1]

Qassim continues to alienate the U.S. and Britain, and Britain further exacerbates relations by declaring its Kuwait colony free and independent. Qassim holds a press conference on June 19, at which he declares that "Iraq regards Kuwait as an integral part of its territory." Following that press conference, Britain quickly masses troops in Kuwait with naval support in the Gulf. [3]

Britain's military intervention in Kuwait is ostensibly to defend the country from imminent Iraqi invasion. Declassified documents suggest, however, that British planners fabricated the threat to justify intervention. [2]

1963:

Elections held for National Assembly, under terms of newly-drafted constitution. [1]

Kuwait gains admission to the United Nations in 1963, the same year that Qassim is killed and his government overthrown in a CIA supported coup led by the Baath Party. [3]

1970s:

Throughout the 1970s, Iraq offers compromises to Kuwait's rulers that will enable Iraq to gain access to its former islands in the Gulf. But no agreements are reached, and the floating border separating the two countries creeps northward. [3]

1976:

Emir suspends National Assembly, saying it is not acting in the country's interests. [1]

1980:

Iran-Iraq war: Kuwait supports Iraq strategically and financially. [1]

1981:

National Assembly recalled; dissolved again in 1986. [1]

1985-86:

Domestic security concerns, particularly about Iran's perceived influence over the Shi'ite minority, prompt the deportations of thousands of expatriates, many of them Iranian. [1]

1988:

August - Iran and Iraq agree a cease fire. [4]

The war with Iran has left Iraq in ruins. When Saddam Hussein launched his eight year war against Iran, Iraq had \$40 billion in hard currency reserves. But by the end of the war, his nation is \$80 billion in debt. Iraq is pressed to repay the \$80 billion to Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, with interest. While Iraq was distracted by its war, Kuwait had accumulated 900 square miles of Iraqi territory by advancing its border with Iraq northward. This was presented to Iraq as a *fait accompli* and it gave Kuwait access to the Rumaila oil field. The Kuwaiti Sheik had purchased the Santa Fe Drilling Corporation of Alhambra, California, for \$2.3 billion and proceeded to use its slant drilling equipment to gain access to the Iraqi oil field. [3]

1989:

March - Kuwait demands a 50% increase in the OPEC quota. The demand is rejected but Kuwait goes ahead, doubling oil production to over 2 million barrels a day. Some of this comes from the disputed Rumaila oil field, situated on the Iraq / Kuwait border. [4]

Kuwait demands that Iraq pay back the 30 billion dollars it had loaned them during the war. Iraq tries to negotiate but Kuwait responds with an intransigence that surprises observers. [4]

The CIA allegedly agrees to help Kuwait put economic pressure on Iraq. [4]

William Webster (director of the CIA) testifies before Congress that US dependence on Gulf oil had risen from 5% in 1973 to 10% in 1989, predicting it would reach 25% by 2000. [4]

General Norman Schwarzkopf makes several visits to Kuwait prior to the Iraqi invasion. [4]

1990:

Kuwait, under U.S. tutelage has increased its oil production to undermine OPEC quotas thereby driving the price of Iraqi oil down from \$28 per barrel to \$11 per barrel and further ruining the Iraqi economy. Appeals from Iraq, Iran, Libya, and other countries to the Emirates, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and Egypt to stick to OPEC production levels are met with increased naval activity in the Persian Gulf by the United States. In February, Saddam Hussein speaks at the Amman summit on the relationship between oil production and the U.S. navy buildup and warns that the Gulf people and the rest of the Arabs face subordination to American interests. [3]

Following this speech the Western press carries stories of Saddam's missiles, chemical weapons and nuclear potential. The Israeli press speculate about pre-emptive strikes such as the Israeli attack on Iraq's nuclear power plant in 1981. In spite of Iraqi diplomatic appeals, Kuwait and the Emirates increase oil production, harming their own economic interests, but damaging Iraq's even more so. Kuwait refuses to relinquish Iraqi territory it had acquired during the Iran Iraq war which Kuwait had helped finance. Kuwait also rejects production quotas and rejects appeals to cease pumping oil from Iraq's Rumaila oil reserve. It refuses to forgo any of Iraq's debt. [3]

August - Two days before the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, Assistant Secretary of State John Kelly testifies before the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee that the United States has no defense treaty relationship with any Gulf country." The New York Daily News editorialized on September 29, 1990, "Small wonder Saddam concluded he could overrun Kuwait. Bush and Co. gave him no reason to believe otherwise." [3] [4] On August the 2nd Iraq invades Kuwait. President George Bush phones King Hussein of Jordan and tells him he has 48 hours to reach a negotiated settlement. King Hussein brokers a conference between Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and Iraq to take place on the 5th. Saddam tells him he will go, and begin withdrawing troops on that day, providing no condemnation is made at the Arab league Summit. [4]

When Hussein arrived in Jordan he discovers that Egypt, under duress, from the US, has introduced a resolution condemning the invasion, which was adopted by the Arab League. [4]

Iraq makes a peace proposal which links withdrawal from Kuwait to discussions of the Israeli occupied territory, and replacement of US troops with UN monitored Arab troops in the Gulf. Bush rejects it. [4]

In mid August Iraq submits a new proposal for an Iraqi withdrawal and release of foreign nationals in return for the lifting of sanctions, access to the Gulf, and control of the Rumaila oil fields. The plan is delivered to Brent Scowcroft, Bush's National Security Advisor. Secretary of State James Baker denied the offer had been made, an embarrassing lie since The Whitehouse simultaneously acknowledged it. [4]

Tariq Aziz again says Iraq is willing to negotiate. There is serious Saudi interest in the proposal, but the US pressures the Saudis to retract a statement to that effect. [4]

Hussein suggests televised debates between himself, President Bush and Margaret Thatcher. This is rejected. [4]

September - The Iraqi Foreign Ministry publishes verbatim the transcripts of meetings between Saddam Hussein and high level U.S. officials. Knight-Ridder columnist James McCartney acknowledges that the transcripts were not disputed by the U.S. State Department. U.S. Ambassador April Glaspie informed Hussein that, "We have no opinion on...conflicts like your border disagreement with Kuwait." She reiterated this position several times, and added, "Secretary of State James Baker has directed our official spokesman to emphasize this instruction." A week before Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, Baker's spokesperson, Margaret Tutwiler and Assistant Secretary of State John Kelly both stated publicly that "the United States was not obligated to come to Kuwait's aid if it were attacked." (Santa Barbara News-Press September 24, 1990). [3] Bush tells congress that huge numbers of Iraqi troops and tanks are massing in Kuwait to threaten Saudi Arabia. Russian satellite pictures show nothing of the sort. [4]

November - Hussein again expresses willingness to talk. [4]

Bush falsely claims Hussein is close to having nuclear weapons. [4]

The US bribes and bullies UN member states to secure votes for UN Security Council Resolution 678, which authorises 'all necessary means' to uphold previous resolutions and restore peace and security in the area. [4]

December - Bush directs Schwarzkopf to attack at 7:00pm EST on 16th January, to coincide with the evening news. There are now 540 000 US troops in the Gulf. [4]

1991:

January - Iraq offers to withdraw. [4]

On the 9th January James Baker meets Iraqi deputy prime minister Tariq Aziz. Bush tells Baker to offer no negotiation or compromise. [4]

Bush announces that Iraq has rejected a diplomatic solution. [4]

On the 16th January Bush orders bombing to begin. [4]

Congressman Henry Gonzalez moves to impeach Bush on five counts: "*Bush has conspired to engage the US in a massive war against Iraq [...] Bush has committed the US without congressional consent and contrary to the UN Charter to an act of war [...] Bush has conspired to commit crimes against peace in violation of the charters of the UN, Nuremberg and the US constitution.*" [4]

On the 17th January at 7:00pm EST bombardment of Iraq begins. Within the first hours of the war 85% of all electrical power generation in Iraq is destroyed. Within two days not a single baby incubator is functioning in Iraq. [4]

On the 23rd January Colin Powell, Chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff, announces attacks on Iraqi nuclear facilities, without any regard for the UN General Assembly vote or the Geneva Convention. [4]

March - Emir returns, imposes three-month period of martial law. [1]

1992:

Under domestic and international pressure, Emir gives green light to National Assembly elections.

Opposition forces perform well in the vote. [1]

1993:

UN demarcates new Kuwait-Iraq border, awarding a port and a number of oil wells to Kuwait. US troops despatched to Kuwait following Iraqi border incursions. [1]

1994:

Iraq officially recognises Kuwait's independence and the UN-demarcated borders following UN pressure and Russian mediation. [1]

1999:

Emir suspends National Assembly after bitter feud between MPs and cabinet about misprints in state-published edition of the Koran. Government supporters suffer shock setback in resulting elections; liberals and Islamists predominate in the new assembly. [1]

2002:

March - Summit in Beirut: Kuwait and Iraq move towards normalising relations; Iraq promises not to stage a repeat of its 1990 invasion. [1]

2003:

March - Tens of thousands of soldiers converge on the Kuwait-Iraq border for a US-led military campaign against Iraq. [1]

July - Islamist and pro-government candidates fare well in parliamentary elections. There are major losses for liberal candidates. [1]

Emir appoints Sheikh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Sabah prime minister, separating post from role of heir to throne for first time since independence. [1]

2004:

January - Government says up to 200 indictments against Saddam Hussein and his top aides for war crimes during the 1990-91 occupation are being prepared. [1]

Kuwait says it is prepared to waive a "significant" proportion of Iraqi debt. [1]

May - Cabinet puts forward draft legislation which would allow women to vote and to stand for parliament. [1]

Summary

1921-1922: UK creates Kuwait.

1932: Kuwaitis seek reunification.

1937: Oil discovered.

1938-1939: Reunification movement crushed by British.

1955: Baghdad Pact.

1958: No reunification.

1961: Independence. UK intervention.

1963: Kuwait joins UN.

1970s: No agreement with Iraq.

1980: Iran-Iraq war.
1985-86: Security concerns.
1988: Kuwait steals from Iraq.
1989-1990: Kuwait squeezes Iraq, US collude.
1990: Iraq invades. US & UK reject diplomacy.
1991: US & UK invade Iraq.
1993: UN demarcates new Kuwait-Iraq border.
1994: Iraq recognises Kuwait.
2003: US & UK invade Iraq again.

Bahrain

1820:

Abdullah and Salman Al Khalifa sign abstention from piracy treaty with the East India Company. [4]

1835:

Peace Treaty with Britain. [4]

1861:

Treaty of Perpetual Peace and Friendship with Britain: This ceded to Britain control of foreign affairs in return for protection from attack. [4]

1868-1869:

War between Bahrain and Qatar and succession crises. [4]

1869:

Royal Navy intervenes after coup and deports both of the Mohammeds to Bombay and place Isa on the throne. [4]

1881:

Agreement with British. [4]

1891:

Agreement with British. [4]

1902:

First British reports of oil. [4]

From the early 20th century on, British colonial rule grafted numerous legal and administrative reforms onto a tribal form of local political authority centered around the Al Khalifa family. These reforms were also propelled by the transition from an economy organized mainly around feudal-type estates to a more complex commercial and industrial economy based on oil production and export. In the pre-independence period, as rule of law was constructed in numerous domains, political challenges to local and colonial authority continued to be dealt with in summary fashion, with little regard to emerging international norms of political and civil rights. [5]

1923:

British force Isa to hand over day to day running of Bahrain to his son, Hamad. [4]

1925:

Major Holmes granted oil concession in Bahrain. [4]

1931:

The Bahrain Petroleum Company (Bapco), a subsidiary of the Standard Oil Company of California (Socal), discovers oil at Jabal al-Dukhan and production begins the following year. [2]

1935:

Main British naval base in the region moved to Bahrain. [4]

1939:

Britain decides that the Hawar Islands which lie in the Gulf of Bahrain between Bahrain and Qatar belong to Bahrain not Qatar. [2]

1949:

A US three warship Middle East Force (MEF) is headquartered in Bahrain. [5]

1956:

Anti-British Riots as a result of Suez. British troops landed to control the riots. [4]

1961:

Sheikh Isa ibn Salman al Khalifa becomes amir after the death of his father Sulman bin Hamad al-Khalifa. [3]

1966:

Scot Ian Henderson takes charge of Bahrain's security. He had previously served in Kenya fighting the Mau Mau uprising. Henderson and the security forces become synonymous with torture and repression during his service. [1] [5] [6]

Britain puts down demonstrations against the regime. The Economist notes that 'the British have no sympathy with the notion of political organisations in Bahrain'. [1]

1967:

Britain moves its main regional naval base from Aden to Bahrain. [2]

1968:

Britain announces it will close its bases east of Suez by 1971. [2]

1970:

The Administrative Council becomes a 12-member Council of State, headed by a president, the ruler's brother, Sheikh Khalifah Bin-Salman Al Khalifah. [2]

Iran renounces its claim to sovereignty over Bahrain after a United Nations report shows that Bahrainis want to remain independent. [2]

Administrative and political reforms established. A 12-member Council of State becomes the supreme executive authority. Initially, four of the twelve Directors were members of the royal family, and there were equal numbers of Shi'i and Sunni Muslims. The Council was renamed the Cabinet of State, with the Sheik as Prime Minister, in August 1971. [3]

1971:

Bahrain declares independence and signs a new treaty of friendship with Britain. Sheikh Isa becomes the first Emir and the Council of State becomes a cabinet. [2]

Bahrain gains formal independence from Britain. [2]

Bahrain and the United States sign an agreement which permits the United States to rent naval and military facilities. [2]

1972:

Elections are held for a Constituent Assembly. Only Bahraini males over 20 can vote. [2]

The first years of independence, from 1972 to 1975, constituted an interlude of sorts. A partially-elected constituent assembly constructed a constitution that endorsed a wide range of internationally recognized civil and political rights and called for a National Assembly of thirty elected and up to fourteen appointed cabinet ministers ex officio, with powers to review (though not initiate) legislation and interrogate members of

the government. Although political parties remained illegal, a national campaign and elections in 1973 led to the emergence of three relatively distinct groupings—a so-called People's Bloc, mainly leftists and Arab nationalists; a Religious Bloc comprising teachers and religious court judges mainly from rural constituencies; and an Independent Middle. [5]

1973:

After the constitution comes into force on 6 December, elections are held on 7 December for a National Assembly, an advisory legislative body, with 44 members (14 cabinet members and 30 elected by male voters). [2]

Bahrain accommodates U.S. requests for increased access to military facilities following the Arab-Israeli war. [5]

1974:

There is widespread unrest due to a sharp rise in the cost of living and a delay in the establishment of trade unions. [3]

1975:

Following claims by prime minister Sheikh Khalifah Bin-Salman Al Khalifah that the National Assembly is impeding the work of the government, the Emir dissolves the assembly and rules by decree. The Constitution is suspended, unrest follows. [2] [3]

The political detente between the ruling Al Khalifa family and the disparate forces of civil society comes apart, when the government is unable to obtain National Assembly approval of a State Security Measures Law, which authorizes arrest and imprisonment for up to three years without charge or trial for undefined "acts" or "statements" that could be construed to threaten the country's internal or external security. In August 1975, the government dissolves the National Assembly by decree. The constitution stipulates that in such an event elections for a new assembly must be held within two months. This the ruling family, steadfastly refuses to do. [5]

1976:

The government decrees a new penal code that substantively nullifies many of the civil liberties and political rights protected by the constitution and effectively criminalizes a wide range of nonviolent political activities. Over the years of unconstitutional rule by decree that follow, other decrees further undermine basic political and due process rights. As a consequence, Bahrain since 1975 is a country where citizens risk search and seizure, and incarceration without charge or trial, for speaking out publicly in a manner that the government regards as hostile or critical. Public advocacy of restoring the National Assembly provisions of the constitution falls into this category. Communications among citizens, and between residents and persons outside Bahrain, are monitored. Political parties and organizations are proscribed, as are independent trade unions. Public meetings and gatherings require prior authorization, which in practice is not given. Radio and television media is directly controlled by the state; a combination of state censorship and stringent self-censorship rules out critical discussion in print of domestic politics or of relations with neighboring states. Abuses that are categorically forbidden by Bahrain's constitution, as well as by international law, such as torture and forced exile, are practiced routinely, as matters of state policy. [5]

1981:

25 May - Bahrain joins the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf, more usually known as the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), which also includes Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

13 December - Seventy-three people, said to be members of the Tehran-based Islamic Front for the Liberation of Bahrain, headed by Iranian cleric, Hojjat ol-Eslam Hadi al-Mudarrisi, are arrested and accused of conspiring to overthrow the government on 16 December, Bahrain's National Day. [2]

1982:

The Shi'i-dominated Bahrain Freedom Movement is established. The more radical Islamic Front for the Liberation of Bahrain (IFLB) has operated at least since 1981 when it attempted a coup against the government. [3]

1984-85:

The situation in Bahrain is tense because of security concerns. There were rumors of plots to overthrow the government, possibly with the assistance of Iran. Since the suspension of the National Assembly, the government has imposed strict censorship on the press, and banned political parties and trade unions. [3]

1986:

In April, Qatari troops occupy Fasht al-Dibal Island but withdraw in June after mediation by Saudi Arabia.

26 November - Opening of the King Fahd causeway which links Bahrain to the mainland of Saudi Arabia. [2]

1987-1988:

Bahrain accommodates U.S. requests for increased access to military facilities during the so called "tanker war", in which US forces protect Iraqi oil shipments against Iranian attack. [5]

The U.S. accounted for \$260 million in arms deliveries to Bahrain between 1979 and 1988, out of total arms deliveries of \$625 million [5]

1991:

January/February - As part of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Peninsula Shield Force, Bahrain participates in the coalition "Operation Desert Storm" against Iraq (the Gulf War)

July - Qatar takes its territorial claim to the Hawar Islands, Fasht al-Dibal and Qitaf Jaradah before the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in The Hague but Bahrain rejects the claims.

27 October - Bahrain signs a defence cooperation agreement with the United States providing for port facilities and joint military exercises. [2]

1992:

20 December - The establishment of a 30-member Consultative Council, appointed by the emir for a four-year term. [2]

1993:

Amnesty International publishes a critical report on human rights abuses, particularly the forced exportation of nationals, in Bahrain. [3]

1994:

December - Demonstrations follow the arrest on 5 December of Shia cleric, Sheikh Ali Salman, who calls for the restoration of the National Assembly and criticises the ruling family. [2]

There are several opposition movements currently operating in Bahrain including the Islamic Front, the Bahrain Liberation Front, the Islamic Movement of Free Bahrainis, the Popular Front in Bahrain, and the Bahraini Liberation Front. Based mainly within the Shia community, they are demanding the guarantee of basic liberties, respect for human rights, free and comprehensive elections, and a new constitution. There is a semblance of martial law in the country. (BBC, 12/29/1994) [3]

1995:

15 January - Sheikh Ali Salman is deported and seeks asylum in Britain. [2]

15 February - Bahrain rejects International Court of Justice (ICJ) mediation in its dispute with Qatar. [2]

By late February between 300 and 2000 people are in detention following continued street protests. [5]

26 June - After a reshuffle, the cabinet includes five Shia ministers. [2]

However, discrimination against Shia worsens. [5]

July - The US Navy's Fifth Fleet is established in Bahrain. [5]

25 September - A Shia cleric, Sheikh Abd-al-Amir al-Jamri, arrested in April, is released from prison. [2]

Eighteen members of the US Congress sign a letter to Bahrain's ambassador urging the government "to uphold international standards of human rights" and citing reports of "forced exiles, detentions without trials

and deaths under torture." The U.S. government, however, has consistently avoided opportunities to criticize Bahrain's abusive human rights record. [5]

The U.S. accounted for \$700 million in arms deliveries in the 1988-1995 period, out of total deliveries of \$800 million. [5]

1996:

January/February - After bomb explosions in Manama's business quarter, Al-Jamri is arrested again on 18 January. A Sunni lawyer and poet, Ahmad al-Shamlan, is also detained on 8 February, but released in April. [2] [5]

25 January - US Assistant Secretary of State Robert Pelletreau says that unrest in Bahrain "is brought about by a fairly high level of unemployment and some unrest in Bahrain's Shi'a community. It is urged on and promoted by Iran, across the Persian Gulf.... [Bahrain's leaders] are dealing with it, in my view, in a responsible way that deserves our support." [5]

State Department officials responsible for monitoring Iran's role in the Persian Gulf, speaking off the record, tell Human Rights Watch in early 1996 that they have seen no evidence of an important or an instigatory Iranian role in Bahrain's political unrest. [5]

March - The government expands the jurisdiction of the State Security Court, reducing the ability of accused persons to defend themselves. The Security Court is also expanded in size to cope with the extra cases. [5]

3 June - The government says it has uncovered a coup plot by an Iranian-backed group, Hezbollah-Bahrain. Bahrain recalls its ambassador to Iran and downgrades its representation to charge d'affaires level. [2] [5]

28 September - The Consultative Council members are increased from 30 to 40. [2]

Secretary Perry returns to Bahrain to arrange for the basing of twenty three additional U.S. Air Force F-16s for use in patrolling the southern Iraq "no-fly" zone. [5]

1997:

Shias suffer from higher rates of unemployment and are barred from employment in the police or security services. The government maintains that the protests plaguing the country are organized by Hezbollah-Bahrain, allegedly backed by Iran. (Middle East Review of World Information) [3] [5]

March - US Deputy Secretary of Defense John White visits Bahrain for talks on military cooperation. [5] Former President George Bush visits Bahrain and publicly commends the authorities for their handling of the protests: "I salute the government of Bahrain for preserving order and for guaranteeing for every Bahraini citizen a secure environment." [5]

April - Alleged members of the Bahrain Hezbollah are on trial. In all, 54 Shia Moslems in detention and 27 others being tried in absentia are accused of fomenting violence and anti-government activities. (AFP, 3/6/1997) The existence of a Bahrain Hezbollah is itself questioned by some who accuse the government of fabricating its existence in order to blame outsiders for the political unrest. (Intelligence Newsletter, 7/4/1996) [3] [5]

1 April - Bahrain acquires sole ownership of Bapco. [2]

June - Crown Prince Isa al-Khalifa meets with senior interior and defense ministry officials and elite troops to look at the security concerns amid continuing unrest. Numerous Jordanians are reportedly employed as officers in Bahrain's security forces. (DPA, 6/23/1997) [3]

July - Human Rights Watch reports: Human rights abuses in Bahrain are wide-ranging and fall into two basic categories. The first relates to law enforcement and administration of justice issues. These encompass the behavior of security forces toward those under arrest and detention, and when confronting civil disturbances; arbitrary detention; physical and psychological abuse of detainees; denial of access to legal counsel; and denial of the right to a swift and impartial judicial hearing. The second area of human rights violations relates to the broad denial of fundamental political rights and civil liberties, including freedom of expression, freedom of association and assembly, and the right to participate in the conduct of public affairs. In terms of numbers of people affected, the situation has been particularly acute since the end of 1994, with the onset of a period of protracted civil unrest that has continued into the spring of 1997. This unrest has increasingly taken on the coloration of a sectarian conflict between the majority Shi'a population and the

Sunni ruling family and military-political establishment. The government of Bahrain has dismissed the unrest as the work of "Hizb Allah terrorists" instigated and supported by Iran.

Respect for human rights has long been problematic in Bahrain, and many abusive practices derive from the policies pursued by Great Britain prior to independence in 1971..... [5]

August - A U.N. Sub-commission on the protection of minorities expresses concern over the violation of human rights, including discrimination against the Shia majority, extrajudicial executions, allegations of torture, and arbitrary detention, in Bahrain. (DPA, 8/21/1997) [3]

1998:

February - Sheikh Khalid Bin-Muhammad Bin-Salman Al Khalifah replaces British citizen, Ian Henderson, as Director of the Security and Intelligence Service (SIS). Henderson takes up a role as advisor to the interior ministry. [1]

May - The Financial Times reports that the Bahraini government 'continues to crack down on the slightest sign of dissent'. [1]

16-19 December - Bahrain provides military facilities for "Operation Desert Fox", the US and UK bombing campaign against Iraq. [2]

The economy improved greatly during 1997 which greatly lowered the intensity of political conflict in the country. Increased oil revenues led to increased government expenditure and improved economic opportunities for the local population. However, it is estimated that 1400 political prisoners remain in jail. Dissidents were publicly executed during 1996, and a popular leader Abdel Amir al-Jamri died while in detention in July 1997. (Middle East Review of World Information) [3]

1999:

6 March - The emir, Sheikh Isa, dies and is succeeded by his eldest son, Sheikh Hamad. On March 9, Sheikh Hamad's son, Sheikh Salman, becomes Crown Prince.

July - Sheikh Abd-al-Amir al-Jamri is sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment but is pardoned by the new Emir.

29 December - The emir of Qatar, Sheikh Hamad Bin-Khalifah Al Thani, visits. Both countries establish committee to settle territorial disputes. [2]

2000:

January - After a joint Independent/Channel 4 investigation, the UK Home Secretary Jack Straw announces that an investigation has begun into Henderson by the Metropolitan Police, who are in receipt of papers alleging torture. [1] [6]

July - British national Ian Henderson resigns as adviser to Bahraini government after career as head of repressive internal security service. [1] [6]

September - Emir appoints for the first time non-Muslims and women to the Consultative Council, including four women - one of whom is a Christian - and a Jewish businessman. [2]

2001:

February - Referendum on political reform; Bahrainis overwhelmingly back proposals under which Bahrain would become constitutional monarchy with elected lower chamber of parliament and independent judiciary. [2]

All political prisoners are pardoned and the state security law and state security court, which severely suppressed basic freedoms, are abolished. [1]

2002:

14 February - Bahrain turns itself into a constitutional monarchy and allows women to stand for office in a package of reforms.

May - Local elections are held, Bahrain's first poll for almost 30 years. For the first time women vote and stand as candidates, but fail to win a seat.

October - Parliamentary elections held, the first for nearly 30 years. Authorities say the turnout was more than 50% despite a call by Islamist parties for a boycott. [2]

The king announces the restoration of parliament, with the creation of a lower house - consisting of forty elected members - and an upper house - a shura or consultative council, of forty members appointed by the king. [1]

These are significant improvements for Bahrainis, but major brakes on democratic freedoms remain. Most important is the fact that the new parliament is less powerful than the old one suspended in 1975. The appointed upper house is far more powerful than the elected chamber, meaning that the king retains overall control. [1]

Britain continues to side with the rulers, rejecting calls to use its close military and political ties with the Bahrain regime publicly to press it to end abuses. Britain continues to arm and train the regime and exports arms to 'all units of the Bahraini security forces, including the Bahrain Defence Force and the Bahrain National Guard, whose forces have received some training from the Ministry of Defence. That training is 'tailored to Bahrain's requirements', a parliamentary committee notes, while the MoD describes Bahrain as 'a key regional ally of the UK'. [1]

2003:

May - Thousands of victims of alleged torture petition king to cancel law which prevents them from suing suspected torturers.

November/December - Security concerns as UK, US warn of serious threat of terrorist attacks against Western targets in Bahrain. [2]

2004:

April - Nada Haffadh is made health minister - the first woman to head a government ministry. [2]

May - Protests in Manama against fighting in the Iraqi holy cities of Najaf, Karbala. The king sacks the interior minister after police try to prevent the protest. [2]

September - Bahrain and US sign free trade pact; Saudi Arabia condemns the move, saying it hinders regional economic integration. [2]

2005:

March-June - Thousands of protest marchers demand a fully-elected parliament. [2]

2006:

January - US President George W Bush signs a bill to enact the 2004 US-Bahrain free-trade agreement after it is approved by the US Congress. [2]

October - USA, UK, France, Italy, Australia and Bahrain stage a mock interception of dangerous weapons technology, an exercise the U.S. expects nearby Iran to notice. [7]

Summary

1820-1900s: Treaties with Britain are followed by colonial rule.

1935: Main British naval base in the region moved to Bahrain.

1949: Three US warships headquartered in Bahrain.

1966: Scot Ian Henderson takes charge of brutal security forces.
Britain puts down demonstrations.

1971: Independence and a treaty of friendship with Britain.
U.S. rents military facilities.

1973: U.S. gains increased military facilities after the Arab-Israeli war.

1975: Emir starts to rule by decree. Major repression follows.

1987-1988: U.S. increases military facilities during the "tanker war".

1991: Bahrain in the Gulf War.

1995: The U.S. Navy's Fifth Fleet is established in Bahrain.

1996 onwards: Britain and U.S. continue to back Bahrain's brutal rule.

2000: In U.K. an investigation begins into Henderson.

Oman

1786:

Muscat becomes capital city. Al-Busaids take title of Sultan. [1]

1798:

Treaty with British government. [1]

1800:

Treaty of Protection with British government. [1]

1842:

Omani empire divided into two: Zanzibar is split from Muscat and Oman. [1]

1891:

Treaty of Peace, friendship and navigation with Britain. [1]

1913:

Death of Sultan Turki results in tribal unrest. [1]

1915:

Interior tribes ride on Muscat, repelled by British. [1]

1920:

Sultan and Imam sign treaty at Seeb. [1]

1939:

Treaty of Peace, friendship and navigation with Britain. [1]

1951:

Treaty of Peace, friendship and navigation with Britain. [1]

1952:

Saudis ejected from Buraimi oasis by British and Omanis. [1]

1954 onwards:

Clashes resume between Imamite forces, seeking an independent state in the interior, and those of the sultan. [2]

1955-1959:

Power of Imamate curbed in the interior by joint Sultan and British action. [1]

1957:

July - Britain begins military intervention in Oman in support of extremely repressive regime against rebellion by Omani Liberation Army. The OLA were backed by King Saud of Saudi Arabia, US oil company Aramco and Egypt's president Nasser. SAS fights covert war and RAF conducts wide-spread bombing of villages and strongholds, defeating rebels by 1959. [3]

1959:

Sultan Said bin Taimur regains control of the interior. His rule is characterised by a feudal and isolationist approach. [2]

1964:

Oil reserves are discovered; extraction begins in 1967. [2]

Britain begins second war in support of Oman regime, against the Popular Front for the Liberation of the Occupied Arabian Gulf, fought mainly covertly by the SAS. The 'Dhofar Rebellion' is defeated by 1975. [3] [1]

1965:

The UN General Assembly passes a resolution recognising Oman's right to self-determination, stating that this is being prevented by Britain's colonial presence and calling on Britain to withdraw. Britain brushes aside the UN's calls. [3]

1970:

July - British coup in Oman overthrows Sultan and installs his son. Sultan Qaboos remains in power today. The coup is sanctioned by Harold Wilson and carried out shortly after the Heath government takes power in the June general election. A detachment from the Omani army surrounds the Sultan's palace and British flown aircraft from the Omani air force drop teargas bombs, providing cover for military advance. British officials organise everything but express 'amazement' at suggestions in the Guardian that they might have anything to do with the coup. Britain installs the old Sultan in the Dorchester hotel in London where he dies two years later. [3]

1970-1975:

The new Sultan is immediately surrounded by British advisers and officers, including a four-man SAS unit entrusted with his personal protection. Under cover of a 'British army training team', an SAS unit organises irregular forces to fight the rebels and British forces number 1,000 by 1974. They include a psychological operations unit that undertakes leaflet drops and radio broadcasts to guerrilla-held areas. [3]

Customary methods are used in countering the rebels. One British army officer states that they 'burnt down rebel villages and shot their goats and cows. Any enemy corpses that we recovered were propped up in a corner of the [main city's market] as a salutary lesson to any would be freedom fighters'. [3]

Assistance is also provided by Iran, Jordan, and the US via Saudi Arabia. By 1975 the last group of rebels surrenders or crosses the border into Yemen. [3]

1980:

The US and Oman sign two agreements. One provides access to Omani military facilities by U.S. forces under agreed-upon conditions. The other agreement establishes a Joint Commission for Economic and Technical Cooperation, located in Muscat, to provide U.S. economic assistance to Oman. [4]

1981:

Oman is a founding member of the six-nation Gulf Cooperation Council. [2]

1997:

Sultan Qaboos issues a decree which allows women from across the country to stand for election to - and vote for - the majlis al-shura or Consultative Council. Two women are duly elected to the body. [2]

1999:

Oman and neighbouring United Arab Emirates (UAE) sign a border agreement defining most of their disputed common frontier. [2]

2001:

October - Large-scale British-Omani military exercises in the Omani desert coincide with the launch of strikes against the Taliban in Afghanistan. [2]

2002:

November - Sultan Qaboos extends voting rights to all citizens over the age of 21. Voters were previously chosen from among tribal leaders, intellectuals and businessmen. [2]

2003:

October - First elections to the majlis al-shura in which all citizens over the age of 21 are entitled to vote produce little change in the political make-up of the lower house. [2]

Summary

1798: First treaty with UK.
1842: Omani empire split.
1913: Tribal unrest.
1915: British repel interior tribes.
1920: Sultan and Imam sign treaty.
1952: UK and Omanis eject Saudis.
1954 onwards: Clashes between forces of Imam and Sultan.
1955-1959: Power of Imamate curbed Sultan and British.
1957: UK military intervention.
1959: Sultan controls interior.
1964: Oil discovered. UK intervene.
1965: UK refuses to withdraw.
1970: British coup.
1975: UK finally defeats rebels.
1980: Agreement with US.
1997: Women enter politics.
1999: Border agreement with UAE.
2001: Military exercises with UK.
2002: More voting rights.

Yemen

1839:

Aden: British seize Aden to satisfy need for coaling station between Egypt and India.....port administered as part of India. [4]

1918:

North Yemen: Ottoman empire dissolves, North Yemen gains independence and is ruled by Imam Yahya. [1]

1948:

North Yemen: Yahya assassinated, but his son Ahmad beats off opponents of feudal rule and succeeds his father. [1]

1954:

Aden: British Petroleum constructs refinery at Little Aden. [4]

1956:

Aden: SAS men were reportedly sent to Aden at the beginning of local opposition to British rule there. [3]

1958:

North Yemen: Pro Nasarist sentiments lead to loose federation with Egypt and Syria. [4]

1959:

Aden: Federation of Arab Emirates of the South created as an autonomous territory under British protection. [4]

1962:

North Yemen: Imam Ahmad dies, succeeded by his son but army officers seize power, set up the Yemen Arab Republic (YAR), sparking civil war between royalists supported by Saudi Arabia and republicans backed by Egypt. [1]

North Yemen: MI6 and SAS begin covert operation in North Yemen that eventually involves providing arms, funding and logistical support to royalist rebels in dirty war against pro-Egyptian republican forces. In this the British government colludes with Israel's Mossad and the Saudi regime. Around 200,000 die in the war. [2] [5]

North Yemen: MI6 work with tribesmen recruited locally to 'direct the planting of bombs' at Egyptian military outposts while garrison towns are 'shot up' and political figures murdered. The RAF also conducts some secret bombings against Egyptian targets. The British government decides there can be no official SAS involvement, but authorises it to organise a mercenary operation that eventually involves dozens of ex-SAS servicemen. MI6 provides intelligence and logistical support to the rebels and GCHQ pinpoints the locations of republican troops. While Whitehall denies official involvement, the secret funds provided to the operation are earmarked to the overseas aid programme. [2]

1963:

Aden: Aden joins the federation...name changed to Federation of South Arabia...National Liberation Front (NLF) declares lead in struggle against British rule. [4]

Aden: Britain rejects a UN call for it to withdraw from Aden and permit self-determination. [2]

1964-1967:

Aden: Britain tries to counter the liberation movement in Aden. The SAS set up plain clothes hit squads to make arrests and engage in shoot outs with political opponents. Attacking the civilian population, RAF bombing destroys rebel villages and crops, causing tens of thousands of people to flee. [2]

Aden: An official British investigation in 1971 observes that the British army had engaged in torture of detainees. The Red Cross and Amnesty International were refused permission to interview detainees in one notorious prison. [2]

1967:

South Yemen (Aden): Formation of southern Yemen, comprising Aden and former Protectorate of South Arabia. Country is later officially known as the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (PDRY). Programme of nationalisation begins. [1]

1970:

North Yemen: In North Yemen the rebels, backed by the British, having failed to dislodge the government sign a treaty ending the war. [2]

1971:

South Yemen: Thousands flee to north following crackdown on dissidents. Armed groups formed in bid to overthrow government. [1]

1972:

North and South Yemen: Border clashes between YAR and PDRY, ceasefire brokered by Arab League. [1]

1978:

North Yemen: Ali Abdallah Saleh named as president of YAR. [1]

1979:

North and South Yemen: Fresh fighting between YAR and PDRY. Renewed efforts to unite the two states. [1]

1982:

North Yemen: Earthquake kills 3,000. [1]

1986:

South Yemen: Thousands die in south in political rivalry. President Ali Nasser Muhammad flees the country and is later sentenced to death for treason. New government formed. [1]

1990:

North and South Yemen: Unified Republic of Yemen proclaimed, with Saleh as president. [1]

Yemen, along with Cuba, are the only nations to oppose USA's UN motions against Iraq, aimed at getting "authorisation" to wage war against Iraq for invading Kuwait. Days after voting against the key use of force resolution of November 29th, Yemen suffers a sharp reduction in US aid. [6]

1991:

Yemen opposes US-led action against Iraq in Gulf War. [1]

1992:

Food price riots in major towns. [1]

1993:

April - Coalition government formed, made up of ruling parties of former north and south. [1]

August - Vice-President Ali Salim al-Baid withdraws to Aden, alleging that south is being marginalised and that southerners are being attacked by northerners. [1]

1994:

Armies of former north and south, which have failed to integrate, gather on former frontier as relations between southern and northern leaders deteriorate. [1]

May - Saleh declares state of emergency and dismisses al-Baid and other southern government members following political deadlock and sporadic fighting. Foreigners flee escalating fighting. [1]

May 21 - Al-Baid declares independence of Democratic Republic of Yemen. Saleh rejects secession as illegal. [1]

July - Northern forces take control of Aden, secessionist leaders flee abroad and are sentenced to death in absentia. [1]

1995:

Yemen, Eritrea clash over disputed island territory. [1]

2000:

October - US naval vessel USS Cole damaged in suicide attack in Aden which is subsequently blamed on al-Qaeda. Seventeen US personnel killed. [1]

Bomb explodes at British embassy. Four Yemenis who are jailed say they carried out attack in solidarity with Palestinians. [1]

2001:

February - Violence in run-up to municipal polls and referendum, in which voters show support for constitutional reform extending presidential term and powers. [1]

November - President Saleh visits US, tells President Bush that Yemen is a partner in the fight against terrorism. [1]

2002:

February - Yemen expels more than 100 foreign Islamic scholars, including British and French nationals, in crackdown on terror and suspected al-Qaeda members. [1]

October - Supertanker Limburg badly damaged in attack, blamed on al-Qaeda, off Yemeni coast. [1]

2003:

April - The 10 chief suspects in the bombing of the USS Cole escape from custody in Aden. [1]

2004:

March - Two militants, suspected of masterminding bombing of USS Cole, are re-arrested. [1]

June-August - Government troops battle supporters of dissident cleric Hussein al-Houthi in the north; estimates of the dead range from 80 to more than 600. [1]

August - Court sentences 15 men on terror charges, including bombing of Limburg tanker in 2002. [1]

September - Government says its forces have killed dissident cleric Hussein al-Houthi, the leader of a revolt in the north. [1]

2005:

March-April - More than 200 people are killed in a resurgence of fighting between government forces and supporters of the slain rebel cleric Hussein al-Houthi. [1]

May - President Saleh says the leader of the rebellion in the north has agreed to renounce the campaign in return for a pardon. Minor clashes continue. [1]

2006:

March - More than 600 followers of slain Shia cleric Hussein al-Houthi who were captured following a rebellion he led in 2004 are released under an amnesty. [1]

Summary

1839: British seize Aden.

1954: BP refinery at Little Aden.

1956: SAS sent to Aden.

1962: North: UK supports royalists.

1963: Aden: struggle against British.

1964-1967: Aden: Britain brutally fights liberation.

1967: Aden becomes South Yemen.

1970: North: British backed rebels sign a peace treaty.

1971: South: crackdown on dissidents.

1972 & 1979: Clashes between North and South.

1986: South: political violence.

1990: North and South unite. Yemen opposes US-led war in Iraq.

1994: Internal conflict.

1995: Clash with Eritrea.

2000: Attacks on US vessel and UK embassy.

2001: Relations with US.

2005: Revolt in north.